

'Religion and Thought of Shah Wali Allah Dihlawi', 1703–1762

Revised ebook edition

by J. M. S. Baljon

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Preface

When my grandfather died in 2001 he left my grandmother well provided for, but with a lot of responsibilities. She took care of his library by donating the books to the Leiden University Library as he had arranged it. She took care of the house by moving everything around. An uncle of mine took care of the finances. However, there was one wish of my grandfather's that weighed heavily on her heart: he had worked on a revised edition of his last book till a year before he died and had wanted to see it published.

Unfortunately it proved difficult to get the book republished. I'll leave it up to the reader to decide why it was difficult to get this book republished, though as a family we are certainly not short of speculation on the topic. We are sure that he would have wanted readers to be able to benefit from the work he had done to improve the book.

Given that many of the potential readers of this work live in Pakistan with little money, we feel sure that a free digital edition is a suitable way to finally give shape to my grandfather's wishes.

Note on the text

No attempt has been made to correctly render transliterations of Arabic, Urdu or any other non-Latin script. This is especially true for the parts of the book added by the heirs of J.M.S. Baljon.

The first chapters of the transcript have been edited for style by Krijn Peter Hesselink. I have done work on page formatting and the like. The parts edited by my brother have endnotes. The rest of the chapters have footnotes at the end of each chapter. In those chapters I have left the original page numbers as my grandfather put them in. I assume this will make it easier on students who want to check with the original edition.

As testimony to both the difficulty anyone would have in making a final version of this text, as well as how serious my grandfather took this revision I want to share with you all one of the pages in the copy of his copy of the book:



I can assure you that it's not due to the picture quality that it's impossible to read the author's notes.

Katinka Hesselink 2012

Abbreviations

A. Works of Shâh Walî Allâh

Anfâs	Anfâs al-`ârifîn, Delhi, 1897
A.Q.	Altâf al-quds fî ma`rifa latâ'if al-nafs, Gujrânwala, 1964
Atyab al-nagham	Atyab al-nagham fî madh sayyid al-`Arab wa'l-wa'l-`Ajam, Delhi, 1890/1
B.B.	al-Budûr al-bâzigha, Bijnawr, 1935/6
F.K.	al-Fawz al-kabîr fî usûl al-tafsîr, Karachi, 1964
Fuyûd	one of the visions recorded in the <i>Fuyûd al-Haramayn</i>
H.	<i>Hama`ât</i> . The Roman numerals refer to one of the 22 chapters.
Haw.	<i>Hawâmi`</i> , Delhi, n.d.
Intibâh	Intibâh fî salâsil awliyâ' Allâh, Karachi, n.d.
`lqd	`lqd al-Jîd fî bayân ahkâm al-ijtihâd wa'l-taqlîd, Karachi, 1959/60
Izâla	Izâlat al-khafâ' `an khilâfat al-khulafâ', Bareli, 1869
al-Juz' al-latîf	al-Juz' al-latîf fî tarjamat al-`abd al-dâ`if, Delhi, n.d.
Khizâna	a chapter of al-Khayr al-kathîr
Lamha	one of the 60 <i>Lamahât</i> , Hydarâbâd, Sind, 1963
Maktûb	Maktûb-i Madanî, Delhi, 1906
Majmû`a	Majmû`a-i wasâyâ-i arba`a, Hydarâbâd, Sind, 1964
Musaffâ	al-Musaffâ, Delhi, n.d.
Musawwâ	al-Musawwâ min al-ahâdîth al-Muwatta', Mecca, 1932-4
Q.J.	al-Qawl al-jamîl fî bayân sawâ' al-sabîl, Karachi n.d.
Qurrat	Qurrat al-`aynayn fî tafdîl al-shaykhayn, Delhi, 1892/3
Sat.	one of the 46 <i>Sat`ât</i> , Hydarâbâd, Sind, 1964
Sharh al-tarâjim	Risâla sharh al-tarâjim abwâb sahîh al-Bukhârî
Tafh.	Tafhîmât-i Ilâhiyya, Dabhel, 1936
Ta'wîl	Ta'wîl al-ahâdîth fî rumûz qusâs al-anbiyâ', Hydarâbâd, Sind, 1966

B. Periodicals and Encyclopedia

AION	Annali dell' Istituto Orientale di Napoli
BOAS	Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
El 2	Encyclopaedia of Islam, New Edition
IC	Islamic Culture
JRAS	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society
MW	The Muslim World

Introduction

Great personalities in pious Muslim circles are never born without some solemn prediction. Shâh Walî Allâh records the following that occurred to his father `Abd al-Rahîm: 'Once he visited the mausoleum of Qutb al-Dîn al-Bakhtiyâr al-Kâkî¹ (d. 1235). The latter addressed him, announced to him the birth of a son and advised him to call him Qutb al-Dîn. When I was born, however, God caused him to forget to name me Qutb al-Dîn. He called me Walî Allâh ("protégé of God") on account of cosmic events indicating that I would be the object of God's constant beneficence (*mutawalla*)' (*Tafh.* II, 154).

At first, this news of a future son threw `Abd al-Rahîm into confusion, since his wife had reached the menopause. The dweller of the shrine then removed `Abd al-Rahîm's perplexity with the simple solution to marry a second time. `Abd al-Rahîm then chose to marry Fakhr al-Nisâ', a daughter of his disciple Shaykh Muhammad of Phulat, a small town in the district of Muzafarnager (western U.P.). According to Shâh Walî Allâh's son Shâh `Abd al-Azîz, Shâh Walî Allâh was born in his maternal grandfather's house in Phulat on 4 Shawwâl A.H. 1114 (February 21, 1703).

Shâh Walî Allâh claims to be a descendant of `Umar, the second caliph (*Anfâs*, 38). He relates that once during a *murâqaba* (meditation ceremony) the whole long line of his ancestors right back to `Umar appeared to him in a shining light (*Kalimât-i tayyibât*, 160). His lineage on the mother's side is traced to Mûsâ al-Kâzim (d. 1294), the seventh *imâm* of the Ithnâ `Ashariyya. In this way, he can also be reckoned among the progeny of `Alî, the cousin and son-in-law of Mohammed.

His ancestors emigrated to India in the thirteenth century. He himself refers to the history of his ancestors with evident delight, saying: 'I hail from a foreign country. My forbears came to India as emigrants. I am proud of my Arab origin and my knowledge of Arabic, for both of them bring a person close to "the sayyid (master) of the Ancients and the Moderns", "the most excellent of the prophets sent by God", and "the pride of the whole creation". In gratitude for this great favour, I ought to conform to the mores and customs of the early Arabs and the Prophet himself as much as I can and to abstain from the customs of non-Muslims of countries beyond Arabia (*`ajam*) and the mores of the Hindus' (*Tafh.* II, 245 f.).

In the beginning, his ancestors occupied offices in the judicature of the Delhi Sultanate. Later, some of them joined the armed forces under the Mughals.² His father, Shaykh `Abd al-Rahîm (1644-1719), did not wish to have any connection with the Court however. In response to an invitation from the Emperor Awrangzîb (d. 1707), he wrote: 'Mystics unanimously declare: "how horrible it is to find a dervish on the threshold of kings". God states: "The fruition of this world is small" (*Qur'ân* IV, 77)' (*Anfâs* 68).

Shaykh `Abd al-Rahîm lived and worked in Delhi where he founded a seminary called after him. This *madrasa Rahîmiyya* was originally located in a building associated with the Ferozshâhî mosque in the Kotlâ Ferozshâh (Tughluqâbâd) area. Later in 1737, the *madrasa* was shifted to the centre of Delhi, not far from the Jâmi` Mosque. In the War of Independence (the 'Mutiny') of 1857 it was reduced to ruins. No trace of it is visible now. At the age of fifteen, two years before the death of his father in 1719, Shâh Walî Allâh was already permitted to assume the responsibility of running the *madrasa*. In other words, the son followed in his father's footsteps. The most fundamental and innovating element in the method of the father's teaching, later on adopted by the son, was studying the *Qur'ân* without the use of any commentary. In this way, the students were induced to think over the Word of God independently. This is also the reason why Shâh Walî Allâh used to teach the *Qur'ân* before the Traditions.

Their personalities were undeniably different. The son was not as detached from the goods of this world and not as afraid of dependence on the Royal Palace as his father for instance. In 1754 he accepted a grant of 51 *bîghâs* of land from the Emperor `Alamgîr II as a *madad-i ma`âsh* (a revenue-free grant of land as means of support) for the *madrasa* (one *bîghâ* is equal to about five-eighths of an acre).

When talking of his early education, Shâh Walî Allâh makes mention of what he calls 'useful suggestions' for daily life he obtained from his father: 'My father advised me to recite *Yâ mughnî* ("O He who satisfies, whom He will, of His servants") (the numerical value of the letters of this exclamation is 1100) 1100 times every day and the *Sûra al-Muzzammil* 40 times. And he used to say both recitations are tried means for contentment of heart and independence of one's surroundings' (*Q.J.* 122). Furthermore, he relates that he saw miracles performed by his father (*Q.J.* 180). We never hear of miracles worked by himself however! Certainly, both of them were teachers, but the son was a typical scholar who produced works of major importance, whereas the father did not write any books. Both of them were mystics, but the mysticism practised by the father shows more 'magical' aspects than that of the son. Just as Ahmad al-Sirhindî (d. 1624), `Abd al-Rahîm claimed to be a *qayyûm*, the highest rank in the mystical hierarchy, enabling its possessor to obtain inspiration directly from the Prophet (*Anfâs* 35).

The difference in nature between Shâh Walî Allâh and his father was announced beforehand, just as Shâh Walî Allâh's birth had been, this time not through a communication from a buried saint but through a

vision revealed to his mother when Shâh Walî Allâh had just been weaned. First, she 'saw in a dream a bird of wonderful shape, which came to my father carrying a sheet of paper in its bill. The name of Allâh was written on it in golden letters. Next, a second bird came to him with another sheet of paper in its bill. It said: "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. If prophethood after Mohammed were possible, We would make him a prophet. With Mohammed, however, prophethood has come to an end"... The first bird had a red bill, while the remainder of its body was dust-coloured like a pigeon. The remaining part of the other bird was green like a parrot.' Shâh Walî Allâh himself gives the following comment on this dream: 'According to the rule of *hikma* (knowledge of high spiritual truths) the correct interpretation is this. The first sheet of paper (with the name of Allâh on it) points to the very perfection of my father, for he was a man of *fanâ*' (passing away from self) and immersion into God. The colour of dust indicates that it relates to someone who is not concerned with metaphysical speculations. Accordingly, a pigeon and a ringdove indeed have pleasant voices but they lack the gift of eloquence. The other sheet refers to the perfection I am endowed with and consists of the capacity to analyse the excellences of prophets. A green colour appertains to someone who can expound metaphysics eloquently like a chattering parrot' (*Tafh.* II, 154 f.). Briefly summarized, the father is a typical example of sainthood, the son a substitute of prophethood.

Under the tutelage of his father, Shâh Walî Allâh studied *al-Fawâ'id al-diyâ'iyya* by Molla Jâmî (d. 1492) by the age of ten. This was the most popular commentary on *al-Kâfiya* by Ibn al-Hâjib (d. 1249), which deals with Arabic syntax, in Indian seminaries. During the next five years of study, he had to peruse many other works. On the subject of *fiqh* (jurisprudence), he studied the commentary of Sadr al-Sharî'a al-Thânî (d. 1346) on *Wiqâya al-riwâya* by the Hanafite Burhân al-Dîn Mahmûd al-Mahbûbî, and the famous handbook on Hanafi *fiqh*, the *Hidâya* of al-Marghînânî (d. 1196), except for a few pages. On *usûl al-fiqh* (principles of *fiqh*), he studied *al-Muntakhab fî usûl al-madhhab* by the Hanafite Husâm al-Dîn al-Akhsîkâtî (d. 1247). For his training in logic, he made use of the *Sharh al-Shamsiyya*, a commentary of Qutb al-Dîn Muhammad al-Râzî al-Tahtânî (d. 1364) on *al-Risâla al-Shamsiyya* by al-Kâtibî (d. 1276). He also read a portion of the commentary of al-Tahtânî on the *Matâlî' al-anwâr fî'l-mantiq* by al-Urmawî (d. 1283). On the subject of *kalâm* (apologetics for the sake of Muslim faith), he studied the whole commentary of al-Taftâzânî (d. 1389) on 'Aqâ'id by Abû Hafs 'Umar Najm al-Dîn al-Nasafî (d. 1142) and the commentary of al-Jurjânî (d. 1371) on *Kitâb al-Mawâqif fî 'ilm al-kalâm* al-Ijî (d. 1355). On the subject of rhetorics, he perused the *Mutawwal* of al-Taftâzânî. On the subject of medicine, he studied the summary written by Ibn al-Nafîs (d. 1288) of the *Qânûn* by Ibn Sînâ (d. 1037), called *Mu'jiz al-Qânûn*. Without doubt the chief attention in Shaykh 'Abd al-Rahîm's teaching was given to mystic literature however. Thus, he studied 'Awârif al-ma'ârif by al-Suhrawardî (d. 1234) and works by the great Persian sûfî poet Jâmî (d. 1492), to wit his *Naqd al-Nusûs* (a commentary on the *Nusûs* of Ibn al-'Arabî's disciple Sadr al-Dîn al-Qûnawî, d. 1263), his *Ashî'ât al-Lama'ât* (a commentary on the *Lama'ât* by 'Irâqî, d. 1289) and his *Sharh-i Rubâ'iyyât*.

He received tuition in the recitation of the Qur'ân from Muhammad Fâdil Sindhî (d. 1732). Under the supervision of Shaykh Muhammad Afdal Siyâlkotî³ (d. 1733), he studied the Tradition, including the *Sahîh* of al-Bukhârî.

When he was in his fourteenth year, his father deemed it time for him to marry. The bride assigned to him was Fâtima, a daughter of his maternal uncle Shaykh 'Ubayd Allâh of Phulat and a sister of Shaykh Muhammad 'Ashiq, who later became his closest disciple and friend. In 1746, having become a widower, Shâh Walî Allâh married Bî Irâda. Talented sons of this couple are Shâh 'Abd al-'Azîz (1746-1824), Shâh Rafî' al-Dîn (1750-1818), Shâh 'Abd al-Qâdir (1753-1813) and Shâh 'Abd al-Ghanî (1756-1812).

At fifteen years of age, he was initiated by his father into the Qâdiriyya and Chishtiyya orders as well as into the Naqshbandiyya branch of Khwâja Khwurd, the son of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindî's spiritual guide Khwâja Baqî Bi'llâh (*Tafh.* I, 11 and 15; *Anfâs* 6).

'During 12 years after the death of his father he continuously read up theological works and dissertations on the implied values of law and morals [...] At the tomb of his father he regularly practised *tawajjuh* (concentration of the soul on the Ultimate Reality) [...] After the study of texts of the four legal schools and principles of jurisprudence in combination of *hadîths*, an irrestable longing seized him to visit Mecca and Medina' (Husayn, M. Hidayat, 'The Persian Autobiography of Shâh Waliullâh', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1912, 166). In those days, a journey to the Holy Cities was a rather risky enterprise however, 'because of the danger of the European pirates in the Indian Ocean' (Muh. Ikrâm, *Rûd-i Kawthar*, Lahore 1970, 90) and his relatives and loved ones, 'upon whose hearts and eyes God had put a cover', did not approve. So Shâh Walî Allâh had to abscond. His people pursued him but without success (*Tafh.* II, 153). On October 21, 1730, he left for Sûrat, the harbour of departure for Indian pilgrims. In his autobiography (*al-Juz' al-latîf*, 28), the Delhi divine makes mention of a safe return to Delhi on December 31, 1732.

During his stay in al-Haramayn (Mecca and Medina) he often visited the Lofty and Holy Shrine of Mohammed.

'The Prophet used to show himself in various delicate figures: at one occasion in a truly majestic and aweful form, at another in an attractive, sweet and delightful shape, and at a third occasion in an effusing condition so that the whole cosmic space seemed pervaded by his spirit' (*Fuyûd* 9th Vision).

In addition to the achievement of other rituals (he performed the *hajj* twice), the Delhi scholar gave his time to the study of the *hadîth*. In Mecca he attended the lectures of the Malikite Shaykh Muhammad Wafî Allâh on the whole of the *Muwatta'* in the recension of Yahya b. Yahya al-Mashmûdî (d. 848). He also received instruction on the Tradition by the Hanafite teacher Shaykh Tâj al-Dîn al-Qalâ'î (d. 1734), a *muftî* (official expounder of Islamic law) of Mecca. And in the Medinian mosque of the Prophet, he could enlarge his knowledge under the guidance of the most outstanding scholar and mystic he met in the Hijâz, the Shâfi'î Shaykh Abû Tâhir al-Kurdî al-Madanî (d. 1733), the third and youngest son of Shaykh Ibrâhîm al-Kûrânî (d. 1690). Both of them, father and son, were highly esteemed by Indian and Indonesian students in the Hijâz and were keen on bringing about syntheses between opposing points of view (J. Voll in BOAS, XXXVIII, 1 (1975), 39). In the companionship of his Medinian tutor, he did not only read up the *hadîth* (the whole of al-Bukhârî's *Sahîh* and capita selecta of other collections of traditions) but also mystic writings such as the *Hizb al-Bahr* of al-Shâdhilî (d. 1258) (*Intibâh* I, 136) and the *Qût al-qulûb* of Abû Tâlib al-Makkî (d. 998). Furthermore, Abû Tâhir often functioned as his *pîr* (sûfî mentor), initiating him into the Shâdhiliyya order and the Shattâriyya order (*Intibâh* I, 134 & 137).

The increased acquisition of knowledge through contact with scholars from various Muslim countries should not, however, be seen as the main result of his stay in the Holy Land. Even more far-reaching was the fact that through the cognizance of different legal schools and divergent religious opinions, he was set to question which of the many choices offered were, in fact, the most reliable, the most valuable. Such cogitations are reflected in the visions he records from his sojourn in Mecca and Medina. In them he occasionally brought doubts with which he was afflicted before the spirit of Mohammed. Thus, he once asked the Prophet: 'Which school of *fiqh* do you prefer so that I may know which one I ought to follow?' (*Fuyûd*, 10th Vision). At times he received answers which, as he frankly admits, ran counter to his own sentiments, as for instance when Mohammed notified him that he should not hold 'Alî superior to Abû Bakr and 'Umar (*Fuyûd*, 33rd Vision). Equally against his temperament was the order of the Prophet to follow the practice of one of the four *madhhabs*, although he disliked *taqlîd* (*Fuyûd*, 46th Vision). This is an unmistakable indication that disputes with foreign colleagues compelled him to abandon previously cherished ideas. In short, his creative capacities, already roused after his father's death, were put to work, improved by a still more critical disposition and stimulated by his contacts with scholars from other parts of the world.

After having received the Prophet's pen on August 14, 1731, in Mecca (see next chapter), Shâh Walî Allâh was compelled by his gradual awakening and by the heavy responsibility placed on him in view of the research work to be done to assign the greater part of the teaching duties to assistants on his return to Delhi, keeping for himself the supervision of the *madrâsa* students. In this way he could give adequate attention to both study and writing.

By his own account, the students nevertheless had a stimulating influence on his authorship. It was, for instance, at the urgent request of his follower Khwâja Muhammad Amîn al-Kashmîrî (d. 1773/4) that he wrote the *Qurât al-'aynayn* and the *Atyab al-nagham*. His closest disciple and cousin Shâh Muhammad 'Ashiq of Phulat (d. 1773) continuously encouraged him to complete the *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha* and in a testimonial to this adherent Shâh Walî Allâh declares: 'In the case of many books, it was he who induced me to commit them to paper and he himself who undertook the neatening of their manuscripts' (*Tafh.* I, 126). In addition, his students sometimes furnished his works with glosses. Thus, Sayyid Sharaf al-Dîn al-Dihlawî wrote comments on the *Hawâmî*, and Shâh Muhammad 'Ashiq prepared an elucidation of *al-Khayr al-kathîr* under the title *Taqrîr Khayr kathîr*. The latter also drew up a Persian biography of his venerated master: *al-Qawl al-jalî* (Persian).

It is also noteworthy that, although he now spent less time on the tuition of the students, their number increased significantly compared with the time before his travel to the Hijâz. Among his students, Sayyid Murad al-Zabîdî (1732 - 91) was certainly one of the most famous in the Arab world. He is the author of the Arabic dictionary *Tâj al-'Arûs* and of the commentary on al-Ghazâlî's *Ihyâ'*, called *Ithâf al-sâda al-muttaqîn*. Another talented disciple was Qâdî Thanâ' Allâh Pânîpatî (1725/6-1810). He is the author of two widely known books: *Tafsîr-i Mazharî*, a Qur'ân commentary named after his spiritual leader Mîrzâ Mazhar Jânjânân (d. 1781), and *Mâ lâ budda min-hu* (on the Hanafî *fiqh*).

If one surveys the thousands of pages the Delhi divine needed for the elaboration of his ideas and sees the ease with which he explains difficult subjects, one may wonder why he still asked for incitements to write. The most likely reason to my mind is that he merely wished to make sure that people were waiting for the results of his efforts and that he was doing meaningful work.

The immense amount of writing paper Shâh Walî Allâh required for the formulation of his views is

certainly not due to a verbose style. On the contrary, he generally prefers compact discourses and a terse phrasing.

The two main causes which eventually led to the enormous growth of his scholarly output are:

- a) a wide scope of interest: he treats almost all topics of Muslim lore, Qur'ânic learning as well as the science of the Tradition, *fiqh* as well as ethics, mysticism as well as apologetic theology, medicine as well as astrology;
- b) a regular repetition of themes in the successive products of his pen; consequently, if one tries to systematize his teachings, one has to gather complementary data from different works for a single topic.

When attempting to draw up a list of his works arranged in order of date, one needs considerable intuition, for there is not much to go by. Only a few writings mention specific dates of completion. For the rest, reference made in some books to earlier works can be helpful in fixing a certain sequence of appearance. Another means affording some aid is the dated licences (*ijâzât*) permitting a disciple to teach a course he had followed under the guidance of his former instructor. If titles of works of Shâh Walî Allâh himself are stated in such a certificate, it means in any case that they were composed before the date of its issue. Lastly, now and then the contents of a book (when indicating maturity of thought or a more traditional train of ideas) may give a clue in assessing a date. So, with all reserve, the following order of their creation has been reconstructed.

Works written before the stay in the Hijâz (1731 - 2) include *al-Qasîdat al-lâmiyya* (Arabic) (a polythematic ode with verses ending in the letter l) and *al-Qawl al-jamîl fî bayân sawâ' al-sabîl* (Arabic) (A Pleasant Discussion and Explanation of the Straight Path). In the second title qualifications necessary for sûfî guide and rules for the education of the novice are expounded and litanies and daily offices of various brotherhoods are set forth. The booklet testifies to the strong attachment of the author to his father, whose views or advice are remembered on nearly every page.

In 1732, during his sojourn in the Holy Land, he prepared an Arabic translation of the Persian tract *Radd-i Rawâfid* (Refutation of the Shî'îs) written by Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindî (d. 1624). He titled it *al-Muqaddima al-saniyya fi'l-intisâr li'l-firqa al-Sunniyya* (Splendid Introduction in Defence of the Sunnî Creed). He made the translation at the request of his Medinian teacher Shaykh Abû Tâhir. Moreover, he 'added useful explanatory and critical notes here and there [... and] has also differed in several places from the original author, and has pointed out his mistakes' (M.G. Zubaid Ahmad, *The Contribution of Indo-Pakistan to Arabic Literature*, Lahore 1967, 115f).

Since the *ijâza* (diploma) granted to his disciple Nûr Allâh b. Mu'in al-Dîn Phulatî on December 4, 1733 mentions the *Fuyûd al-Haramayn* (Arabic) (Effusions of Grace in Mecca and Medina) (*Tafh.* I, 9 & 11), Shâh Walî Allâh will have finished this record of 47 visions he had been favoured with in the two Holy Cities soon after his return to India. The majority of these visions refer to the person of Mohammed in the role of a spiritual guide who answers questions of Islamic doctrine and spiritual practice.

The following four collections of Traditions compiled by the Delhi scholar also date, in all probability, from the time immediately succeeding his stay in the Hijâz, since they chiefly contain traditions he obtained there from his spiritual guides:

- 1) *al-Durr al-thamîn fi'l-mubashshirât al-nabî al-amîn* (Arabic) (Precious Pearls Consisting in Joyful Annunciations from the Trustworthy Prophet); the forty announcements of good news included in this work were communicated in dreams in which the spirit of Mohammed was witnessed; they are divided into three categories: a) the first thirteen, which he received himself from the Prophet; b) the next seventeen, which he heard through the medium of his father, his paternal uncle or his Medinian teacher Abû Tâhir; c) the rest, which he received at third hand as in the case of the visions of Abû Tâhir's father;
- 2) *al-Nawâdir min ahâdîth Sayyid al-awâ'il wa'l-awâkhir* (Arabic) (Funny Traditions of Mohammed Relating Pleasing Anecdotes); these traditions were put together merely because of their curious character; the chain of authorities on which they are based may start with a *jinn*, al-Khidr (a popular figure, who plays a prominent part in story and legend) or very old people like Abû 'Abd Allâh al-Mu' ammar, who is said to have reached the age of 400; most of the Traditions in this collection came from Abû Tâhir;
- 3) *al-Musalsalât min hadîth al-nabî* (Arabic) (Traditions of the Prophet Related by an Uninterrupted Chain of Transmitters); they consist mostly only of an *isnâd* (chain of authorities) without a subsequent *matn* (text); they were handed down to Shâh Walî Allâh by his masters in Mecca and Medina;
- 4) *Arba'ûna hadîthan musalsalatan bi'l-ashrâf fî ghâlib sanadiha* (Arabic) (Forty Traditions mostly with an Uninterrupted Chain of Illustrious Transmitters); a remarkable feature of these Traditions is their brevity; they have the form of aphorisms, which can guide the believer in every department of life.

His later works include the following.

Please reference: <http://www.katinkahesselink.net/sufi/baljon-dihwahli.html>

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Kashf al-ghayn fī sharh al-Rubā'īyyatayn (Persian) (Removing the Cloud when Commenting on Two Quatrains) (preferably sung in the course of *samā'*, listening to spiritual music). In this short treatise two *rubā'īs* of Khwāja Baqī bi-'Illāh (d. 1603) are elucidated, as a correction of al-Sirhindī's interpretation of them.

al-ʿIrshād ilā muhimmat ʿilm al-isnād (Arabic) (A Manual for the Requirements of the Science of *Isnād*). The reason why this treatise in all likelihood dates from the period subsequent to the return from the Holy Land is, according to G.N. Jalbani, 'that every scholar of Haramain he had met had written a book on this subject. He, therefore liked to apprise people on the importance of this science' (G.N. Jalbani, *Life of Shah Waliyullah*, Lahore 1978, 35).

Sharh tarājim abwāb saḥīh al-Bukhārī (Arabic) (Elucidation of the Methodology followed in al-Bukhārī's Collection of Traditions). This treatise contains illuminating annotations on the headings of chapters in the *Saḥīh* of al-Bukhārī, and discusses problems of the *fiqh* of Hanafī and Shāfiʿī schools. Ghulām Mustafā al-Qāsimi supposes that this essay was written about the years 1732/33 (*al-Rahīm*, Urdu periodical, Hyderabad May 1966, 875).

Altāf al-quds fī maʿrifa latāʾif al-naḥs (Persian) (Marks of Divine Favour Consisting in Knowledge of Delicate Functions of the Mind). Analysis of a mystic's inner dimensions in order to show the proper *sūfī* way and to establish a united disciplined community.

Anfās al-ʿārifīn (Persian) (Breathings of Advanced *Sūfīs*). Contains biographical accounts of his ancestors, father, paternal uncle Shaykh Abū Ridā' Muhammad and teachers in India and the Hijāz.

Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha (Arabic) (Peremptory Argument from God). The title derives from *Qurʾān* VI, 149. The second part of it deals with precepts implied in the *ḥadīth*. Here the author follows the classification adopted by the traditionalist Muslim with one significant deviation: the chapters 16-20 (treating marriage, divorce and the like) in the collection of Muslim have been excluded from consideration. As a substitute to these topics, expositions are given on mystical issues like *dhikrs* (spiritual exercises designed to render God's presence throughout one's being), *maqamāt* and *ahwāl* (i.e. stages and states associated with the passage along the *sūfī* Path). The work owes its great renown however to the original presentation of topics in its first part. Here the Delhi scholar 'attempts to elucidate the deeper levels of meaning of traditional symbols and practices while integrating mystical, intellectual, and traditional textual approaches to their interpretation' (Marcia K. Hermansen, *The Conclusive Argument from God*, Leiden 1996, p. XV).

al-Insāf fī bayān sabab al-ikhtilāf (Arabic) (Fair Elucidation of the Cause for Disagreement). The reason for writing this monograph was the deplorable 'factionalism of his days' (*H.B.* I, 161). This essay is to be taken as a kind of complement to the *Hujjat Allāh al-bāligha* and implies at the same time a warning against the then doctors of the law, who are denounced as prattlers and braggarts memorizing indiscriminately the teachings of colleagues, whether their statements were strong or weak.

ʿIqd al-jīd fī ahkām al-ijtihād wa'l-taqīd (Arabic) (Chaplet around a Graceful Neck Concerning the Characteristics of Formulating Independent Judgment or an Unthinking Acquiescence in Received Opinion). This treatise focuses on the appropriateness of *ijtihād* for theological reasoning.

Hamaʾāt (Persian) (Downpours). This work was completed in October/November 1735. It offers an exposition of the historic developments in Islamic mysticism and discusses the intentions and purposes as they are pursued by members of the different brotherhoods.

al-Intibāh fī salās al-awliyāʾ Allāh wa sanāsīd wārithī Rasūl Allāh (Persian) (Heed of the Chains of Spiritual Descent of God's Protégés as well as of the Chains of Transmitters among the Heirs of the Messenger of God). This account of *sūfī* rituals and doctrines of various orders, followed by a list of authorities related to works of *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* was composed in 1740.

Taʾwīl al-aḥādīth fī rumūz qisās al-anbiyāʾ (Arabic) (Explanation of Significant Events Referred to in Profetic Tales). This dissertation on the esoteric background of particular episodes pertaining to the lives of persons who are ranked as prophets was composed more or less after the pattern of Ibn al-ʿArabī's *Fusūs al-hikam*.

Fath al-Rahmān fī tarjamat al-Qurʾān (Persian) (Aid of the Merciful in the Translation of the Qurʾān). This annotated Persian version of the Qurʾān was completed on March 31, 1738 and published in 1743.

Atyab al-nagham fī madh Sayyid al-ʿArab wa'l-ʿAjam (The Most Pleasant Tune Consisting in a Laudation of the Arabs and Non-Arabs). An Arabic ode on Mohammed with a Persian commentary. The ode was completed by Shāh Walī Allāh on June 17, 1743.

al-Qasīda al-Hamziyya fī'l-madāʾih al-nabawiyya (Arabic) (Polythematic Ode with Verses ending in the Letter *hamza* in Praise of the Prophet). It was composed in the beginning of 1745. The Persian commentary on it was finished in 1762.

Muqaddima dar fann-i tarjama-i Qurʾān (Persian) (Introduction to the Art of the Translation of the Qurʾān). Directions for the translators of the Qurʾān.

Hawāmī (Persian) (Drops of Spiritual Dew). Commentary on the *Hizb al-bahr* (Litany of the Ocean) of al-Shādhilī, a collection of invocations credited with protective power preferably recited by seafarers.

Sata`ât (Persian) (Radiances). This monograph offers a compendium of various cosmological concepts and mystic apprehensions peculiar and dear to the Delhi savant. Its title indicates that it was produced under divine inspiration.

al-Musawwâ min ahâdîth al-Muwatta' (Arrangement of the Traditions of the *Muwatta'* in a Convenient Form). For the benefit of the reader, Shâh Walî Allâh rearranged Traditions in the *Muwatta'*, the first written compendium of law produced in Islam, at his own discretion. In addition, he compares inferences deduced from the *hadîths* of this collection by the Mâlikîs with opinions of the Hanafî and Shâfi`î schools.

al-Khayr al-kathîr (Arabic) (Abundant Blessing). The title is taken from *Qur'ân* II, 269, and hints at the blessings gainable from the knowledge of the divine Names, which is one of the main pursuits of this study. The chapters of this highly esoteric writing are aptly called *Khazâ'in al-hikam* (Repositories of Wisdom).

al-Fawz al-kabîr fî usûl al-tafsîr (Persian) (Great Fruition Lying in the Sources of Qur'ânic Exegesis). This is a thoughtful essay on various Qur'ânic issues.

Fath al-khabîr bi-mâ lâ budd min hafz fî `ilm al-tafsîr* (Arabic) (Aid of Knowing of What One ought to bear in Mind in the Science of Qur'ânic Exegesis). This treatise deals with Qur'ânic expressions that are difficult to understand. The following supplement is often appended to *al-Fawz al-kabîr* as the first or last chapter: *Qurrat al-`aynayn fî tafdîl al-Shaykhayn (Persian) (Delight of the Eyes owing to the Light that indicated the Superiority of the first two Caliphs). This supplement consists of a refutation of Shî`î aspersions on Abû Bakr and `Umar. It was prepared round about 1756.

Sarf-i Mîr manzûm (Persian) (Mîr's Inflection in Verse). For the benefit of his little son Shâh `Abd al-`Azîz, Shâh Walî Allâh turned the Arabic grammar of Mîr al-Jurjânî into Persian verse. The child was born in 1746, so this versified primary on etymology must have been completed about 1751/52.

Lamahât (Arabic) (Flashes of Lightning). This work consists of a mystical philosophy with speculations on Being, *a`yân thâbita* (archetypes, i.e. latent realities of things), *tajalliyât* (theophanies), *al-nafs al-kulliyya* (Universal Soul), classes of angels, and the like.

al-Budûr al-bâzigha (Arabic) (Full Moons appearing on the Horizon). The title suggests this book should be considered as a counterpart to the *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha*, for in the preface to the latter work Shâh Walî Allâh states that its contents are like 'full moons (*budûr*) which begin to rise (*bâzigha*) on the horizon of God's "peremptory argument" (*hujjat bâligha*)' (H.B. I, 4). The expositions in this work, dated 1757, are directed to an unknown person, who apparently represents one of Shâh Walî Allâh's students. So it can be taken as a type of textbook which recapitulates a number of topics discussed in earlier writings.

Tafhîmât-i Ilâhiyya (Divine Revelations). This is a miscellaneous collection of short discourses in Arabic and Persian, composed at different times. Thus, for instance, *ijâzas* are inserted with dates varying from 15-10-1729 (*Tafh.* I, 11) to 4-10-1747 (*Tafh.* I, 236). The greater part consists of excursions on mystical and theological questions. However, the work also deals with legal affairs and visions the author has been granted. Furthermore, it uncovers abuses and even contains sermons held on festive occasions.

al-Maqâla al-wâdiyya fî'l-nasîha wa'l-wasiyya (Persian) (Beautiful Treatise in friendly Admonition and Exhortation). In this work, which contains eight admonitions to his children, friends and pupils, a return to the institutions of the early Muslim community is advocated, while Indo-Persian accretions to the faith are rejected. The reason for writing this monograph was the deplorable 'factionalism of the people of his days' (H.B. I, 161). The author argues differences over various aspects of Muslim law date back to the age of the Companions of the Prophet and were due to misunderstanding certain of his acts, to forgetfulness on the part of the reporters, to settling down in different regions, or to changes which took place in the report in the course of its transmission.

Wasîyat-nâma (Persian) (Last Will). This work consists of eight simple advices and discussions on faith, sufism, occult powers operating in the universe and the customs of the country.

Izâlat al-khafâ' `an khilâfat al-khulafâ' (Persian) (Removal of the Veil of Mystery from the Caliphate of the Caliphs). This work consists of a vindication of the caliphate of the first two caliphs and an exposition of the different forms of the caliphate. The book gives the impression of being unfinished and the author acknowledges that he wrote it in a hurry (*Izâla* I, 8).

al-Musaffâ fî ahâdîth al-Muwatta' (Persian) (a clarification of the Traditions of *al-Muwatta'*). This is a sister volume to the *Musawwâ*, but slightly more detailed. It was published posthumously in 1766.

Shâh Walî Allâh died on August 20, 1762 in Delhi.

Chapter one: Vocational Visions

The Delhi innovator was deeply concerned about the embarrassing predicament in which his fellow believers found themselves. A continuous stream of foreign invaders caused great political problems and - still worse - the vitality of people's religious life was under serious threat.

In a vision dated May 16, 1732, the Delhi savant witnessed, while still sojourning in the Hijâz, how a king of the infidels took possession of Muslim regions, plundered their properties and enslaved their children and how he imported pagan rituals and demolished Muslim shrines in Ajmer, which symbolises the centre of Indian Islam (*Fuyûd*, 44th Vision). This vision refers in all probability to the Hindu tribe of the Râjpûts, who 'in 1710 [...] determined to wage war against the Muslim power' (G.S. Sardesai, *The Main Currents of Maratha History*, Patna 1926, 106) and were to occupy Ajmer from 1721 onwards. Such critical situations for the Mughal rulers induced Shâh Walî Allâh to claim: 'The Hindus may one day obtain full power over the whole of India' (*Tafh.* I, 203). We should realise however that observations of this kind are exceptional. Shâh Walî Allâh only rarely hints at the polity of the moment in his works. The small interest in political affairs apparent in his books is an additional argument in support of Muhammad Ikrâm's doubts concerning the authenticity of the entire collection of political letters assigned to the Delhi divine and edited by K.A. Nizami under the title *Shâh Walî Allâh ke siyâsî maktûbât* (Aligarh 1950) (Muhammad Ikrâm, *Rûd-i kaw thar*, Lahore 1970, 548). Along similar lines, Irfân Habîb criticises the exaggeration of Shâh Walî Allâh's political influence in 'The Political Role of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindî and Shâh Walî-ullâh' (*Enquiry*, vol. 59, 1961).

According to the Delhi savant, there were three major factors, which accounted for the deterioration of the spiritual attitude of his contemporaries:

- a) the spread of syllogistic demonstration (*burhân*), which caused nearly all discussions on articles of faith to be permeated by sterile demonstrative argumentations, ridden as they were with Greek logic;
- b) a craving for ecstatic experiences (*wijdân*) roused under the baneful influence of unduly popular sûfis, whose exhibitory raptures, cunning mystifications and poetry impressed the people more than the lessons of the Qur'ân and the Sunna;
- c) the traditional authority (*sam`*) of jurisprudence giving way to excessive individualism: 'people are growing up in an age, in which everybody follows his private views [...] There is no prospect of agreement or compromise. They disagree in all sorts of jurisprudence (*fiqh*). Some are Hanafîs, others Shâfi'îs, and everybody [...] censures the others' (*Tafh.* I, 82 f.).

A number of vocational visions convinced the Delhi scholar that he was charged with the divine task of uplifting the spiritual and moral life of his native country by means of special endowments and capacities conferred on him for this purpose.

The first time he received an intimation of his heavenly mission was on his way to the Hijâz, i.e. in the last months of 1730. Then his Lord gave him to understand: 'This is a most lofty office. You will only accomplish it after having fulfilled what We command of you. In a word, you have to follow the example of the prophets in your moral conduct and spiritual life. You will guide a community from amongst the people. There should be no relationship of love between you and anyone else except the association that is tinged with God's colour. If you fulfill this, you may be provided with what you hope for' (*Tafh.* II, 121).

During his sojourn in the Hijâz, Shâh Walî Allâh obtained various heavenly encouragements to accept his special vocation: 'Then another fragrance was diffused from the side of the Prophet, indicating: God's intention with you is that through you the discomposed state of affairs of the *umma* (the blessed community) will be united [...] Take care not to dispute with the people about the body of positive rules (*furû`*) derived from the Law [...] Again another fragrance was diffused. I noticed in it an admonition of the Prophet [...] to take upon myself the burdens of the prophets [...] and to pursue what would further the integrity of men's religious conduct and the wholesomeness of their inner life' (*Fuyûd*, 31th Vision). In another vision, granted in the Holy Land on May 16, 1732, the Delhi divine sees himself appointed as a 'Master of the Age' (*qa'im al-zamân*) (title of the twelfth *imâm*). In this capacity, he is told to give a scathing criticism of the whole existent system of regulations (*fakk kulli nizâmin*)⁴, for God wanted to replace it by a new order to meet the requirements of the time and wished to employ him for the execution of His designs (*Fuyûd*, 44th Vision).

The most suggestive vocational vision was granted him on August 14, 1731. It has been handed down to us in two slightly different versions. Shâh Walî Allâh describes this telling experience as follows: 'In the night of the 10th of Safar, A.H. 1144, while staying in Mecca, I saw Hasan and Husayn descend into my house in a dream. Hasan carried a reed pen with a broken point in his hand⁵. He stretched out his hand to give it to me and said: 'This is the pen of my grandfather, the Messenger of God'⁶. Thereupon he withdrew his hand and explained: 'Let Husayn mend it first, since it is no longer as good as when Husayn mended it

by knife the first time'. So Husayn took it, mended it and gave it to me. I was delighted with it. Then, a green and white patterned robe was brought. It was laid in front of the two grandchildren. Thereupon Husayn lifted it with the words: 'This robe belongs to my grandfather, the Messenger of God'. And he clothed me⁷ with it. Out of respect I raised it to my head and praised God; and then I awoke' (*Fuyûd*, 6th Vision). In the *Tafhîmât* (II, 248 f.) version of this vision, we read instead of this last sentence: 'From that date my breast was expanded for writing books on religious subjects'. The conclusion that he himself had to make a practical use of the pen of the Prophet had apparently been an afterthought. In the introduction of the *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha*, composed some years later, Shâh Walî Allâh refers to this incident in the following words: 'Once I was sitting after the afternoon *salât* concentrating upon God, when suddenly the spirit of the Prophet appeared and covered me from above with something that seemed to me like a robe thrown over me. In that situation, it crossed my mind that it was a sign of the manner of giving an interpretation of the obligations that God imposes on man. Simultaneously, I felt in my breast a light which continually expanded. After a while, my Lord revealed to me the decree He had set concerning my destiny: one day I would be awakened to this lofty enterprise and I would see "the earth illuminated with the light of its Lord" (*Qur'ân* XXXIX, 69). Rays of light would be reflected at the time of sunset and Mohammed's *sharî'a* would shine forth in this age by manifesting itself in the wide robe of demonstrative proof' (*H.B.* I, 3).

The special relationship which appears to exist between the Delhi scholar and the Prophet is demonstrated with equal clarity by the vision in which the former is invited to give the vow of allegiance to the latter, as happens in the ritual of a *sûfî* order. 'Accordingly', Shâh Walî Allâh tells us, 'I moved nearer to him in my sitting position till our thighs were pressed together. Then the Messenger of God performed the initiation rite of the hand clasp' (*Tafh.* II, 248). Thus, he was united with the spirit of the Prophet in the same way as Uways al-Qaranî⁸ had been (*F.K.* 141). This caused him to realise that Islamic thinking had reached its final stage in his days. 'It is impossible', he confesses, 'to find an epoch more complete than the one we live in' (*Tafh.* II, 143).

All these exclusively inward experiences strengthened Shâh Walî Allâh's self-confidence to a great extent, as may readily be understood. In his autobiography we read: 'God granted me the robe of disclosure and enabled me to give new vigour and guidance to this last age, laying a firm foundation for the understanding of the Traditions by collecting what would meet with God's approval and explaining basic notions in the *hadîth*, considerations of expediency in the laws, as well as the stimulations and all other teachings brought by the Prophet from God. This is knowledge that none before me demonstrated with better argumentation [...] If anyone has his doubts about this, tell him to glance into the book *al-Qawâ'id al-kubrâ*, from which it appears that its author Shaykh 'Izz al-Dîn b. 'Abd al-Salâm (1181-1262), in spite of his efforts, failed to realise even a hundredth part of this science. My entourage inspired me with the spiritual itinerary approved by God, as it should be practised in this age [...] I consolidated the foundations of the creed of the ancient sunnîs by proofs and arguments and by purifying them from nonsensical doubts raised by metaphysicists, in such a way that no room for contest is left. Upon me were poured out: a) thorough knowledge of the four divine perfections, i.e. of absolute originating, temporal creation, planning and guidance; and b) insight into the capacities of the human soul [...] None before me made such a comprehensive study of these most sublime disciplines. Applied science for renewing this age was poured upon me abundantly [...] I was endowed with the power of discerning between the basic teaching of religion as has been handed down by the Prophet and what has been crept in and been tampered with, as well as between what is *sunna* and what has been innovated by sects' (*al-Juz' al-latîf*, 28).

In consequence of the outpouring of countless gifts from heaven, the Delhi divine holds various high offices. He is called *nâtiq* and *fâtih* (enunciator and inaugurator) of a new era, as well as *qâ'id* (chief) and *zâ'im* (ruler) of his generation (*Tafh.* I, 124). Furthermore, he is considered a *mujtahid* (one who possesses the aptitude to form his own judgment) to explore independently all the different branches of Qur'ânic lore (*F.K.* 140). During his meditation near the tomb of the Prophet, he once received the titles of *zakî* (a man endowed with inner light) and *hakîm* (wise man) (*Intibâh* I, 8), so that he is a deputy of the prophet Joseph as the latter disposed of *hikma* (*Tafh.* II, 68). He is charged with the functions of *mujaddid* (renewer), *wasî* (legal guardian who has a recourse to the spirit of the Prophet) and *qutb* (pivot who heads the saintly hierarchy) in order to show the people the right way (*Tafh.* I, 78). In his capacity of *wasî*, he is a person to be obeyed by the whole world. The best interests of mankind lie in his hands (*Tafh.* II, 53 f.). He has been enabled to give such an authoritative interpretation of the Law that because of it even differences of opinion on details disappear (*Tafh.* I, 83).

The great talents with which Shâh Walî Allâh finds himself endowed are said to be the outcome of exceptional favours which with he, surprisingly, happens to be blessed. This awareness of having much to be thankful for almost imperceptibly merges into unpalatable bragging. 'What a pity', he exclaims, 'that Plato has not seen the Greek philosophy I have!' (*Tafh.* II, 12). And he claims he would certainly have surpassed Ptolemy, if he had decided to improve the conditions of the world through mathematics and astronomy

(*Tafh.* I, 101). If we are scandalized by such excessive claims, we should bear in mind that this is a feature the Delhi savant had in common with quite a number of mystics. Hakîm al-Tirmidhî (d. 932), for instance, pretended to be a pillar of the earth. 'Under the guise of humble thanks to God', I. Goldziher writes, al-Sha`rânî (d. 973) 'tells the strangest things about his wonderful qualities' (*Muslim Studies*, London 1971, II, 266).

Chapter two: Extra-scriptural media of divine revelation

Any exposition of Shâh Walî Allâh's thought should start with an explanation of various abstruse technical terms which he assumes the reader to be familiar with. Most of those terms can be included under the chapter heading given above.

a) *`Âlam al-mithâl* (World of Prefiguration)

The *`âlam al-mithâl* is a non-elemental world in which spiritual concepts are represented by quasi-bodily forms, corresponding to them in import. They materialise there in some form or other before they are found on earth (*H.B.* 13). In this respect, it is very similar to Plato's world of archetypes.

The place this world occupies in the universe is typical of the manner in which it functions. Situated between the World of Incorporeity and our Phenomenal World, it acts as an intermediary in a variety of ways. Thus 'it serves for the manifestation of both the World of Immaterial Entities (*`âlam al-arwâh*) above it as well as of the forms reflected from the material world below it. Hence it is made of material of extreme refinement' (*B.B.* 152). To ensure the throne of the queen of Sheba could be easily transported through the air, God invested it with properties of the *`âlam al-mithâl* (*Ta'wîl* 66). In the 'light verse' (*Qur'ân* XXIV, 35), it is symbolically represented by 'the olive tree, which is neither in the East nor in the West, but is situated in the middle of the trees [...] Just as the fire of a lamp continues to burn in the wick through the oil (taken from the olive tree), the oil functioning as its vehicle, similarly the Divine Form subsists in that part of the universe which happens to be right in the middle of it, namely the *`âlam al-mithâl*, which, like the well-proportioned olive tree, is neither in the East nor in the West, i.e. it is neither incorporeal [...] nor does it belong to the category of the bodies [...] but it is between both of them. This part of the universe is completely fitted to the purely Incorporeal and on that account, it has become its vehicle and mirror' (*Sat.* 46). 'The *`âlam al-mithâl* is an intermediate screen (*barzakh*) between the empirical and the divine world. Thus, comprehensive planning comes from the divine world by way of the *`âlam al-mithâl*' (*Tafh.* I, 220).

'For the *nafs kullîyya* (i.e. the universe in the aggregate), the *`âlam al-mithâl* performs the function of *khayâl* (the storehouse of the imagination) which is connected somehow with the Throne (upon which the Merciful One Himself sat after the creation of the universe and where all that will befall in the phenomenal world is determined)' (*Tafh.* I, 193 & II, 180).

In conclusion we may say that the *`âlam al-mithâl* in essence represents a World of Prefiguration, in which things and events are shaped in the same way as an architect draws the shape of a house on a piece of paper before he builds it in empiric reality (*Tafh.* I, 224). Its material is of a much more refined quality than that of our world, in which everything is composed of the four coarse elements: air, water, fire and earth (*Tafh.* I, 164). Accordingly, having received a body of this fine and light material, Jesus could ascend to heaven (*Ta'wîl* 76).

b) *Hazîra al-quds* (Holy Enclosure)⁹

The *hazîra al-quds* appeared for the first time, when the celestial spheres came into existence, whirling around the earth like the whorls on a spindle (*afîâq*), together with their faculties and equipped with the knowledge necessary to them. The Self-existent was the first notion which they conceived. Hence He manifested Himself in the *hazîra al-quds*.

When the cosmic processes required them to be joined by superior angels and by the souls of wise men, those angels and souls were urged by their nature to feel drawn towards the *hazîra al-quds* like iron to a magnet. Consequently, the circle of the *hazîra al-quds* was extended (*Lamha* 32) and became the location where the souls are free from their bodily garb and gather with the supreme spirit (*al-rûh al-a`zam*) (*H.B.* I, 36). The Holy Enclosure owes its name, as Shâh Walî Allâh explains, to the fact that the spiritual concentration of angels and the spirits of perfect people 'enclose' it (*Tafh.* I, 65).

It is there that the most magnificent *tadallî* (theophany) descends. Because of the lightening flash of divine majesty, the souls of these perfect men become bewildered. This *tadallî*, though being one by itself, can assume manifold appearances (*burûzât*) adapted to the attendant circumstances on earth. On one occasion it appears in the shape of general prophethood, on another in the shape of the special prophethood of our prophet Mohammed, and on still another in the institution of our *salât*, etc. All these manifestations meant for the sublunary world are prepared in the *hazîra al-quds* (*Fuyûd*, 4th Vision). Owing to its primary function of revealing divine devices for humanity, the *hazîra al-quds* is not so much a kind of marked-out space, but rather a manifestation of the Merciful One reflected in a coarse substance like gypsum (*Tafh.* I, 65) in the same way as a human form is reflected in a mirror¹⁰. So the most appropriate description of the *hazîra al-quds* is the term *hadra* which, within a mystic context, denotes God's presence, as well as a stage of Being in which He descends and reveals Himself.

In conclusion, we may say that Shâh Walî Allâh sees the *hazîra al-quds* as a major instrument for divine revelation, particularly in view of devices considered to be beneficial to the inhabitants of the earth, for which purpose decisions are made there, as it also functions as the will power of the universe.

c) Angelic Categories

The most essential trait of angels is their function of intermediary, or to put it in the words of the Delhi divine: 'The actual *raison d'être* of angels is that universal expediency (*maslaha*) requires the existence of a divine zone that synthesises the ontological levels of the unconditioned and the conditioned, of necessarily existent being and contingent being, in such a way that a bridge is formed between the two categories' (*Tafh.* I, 192).

Angels are perceptible counterparts to the divine Names¹¹ (*Khizâna* 3), marks of a reality in the World of divine Omnipotence and accordingly not composed of elemental bodies, which are made up of water and clay¹². 'They have characteristics which differ from the characteristics of elemental substances, so that they do not change from one phase to another, as Zayd does, who is first a child, then a youth and ultimately an old man, possessing at first a pale complexion and a slender stature and later a dark complexion and a humped back' (*B.B.* 178). Their souls are therefore more perfect than those of men. And the materials they are composed of are more refined than those of men. Consequently, they are in the possession of complete revelation (*wahy*) and comprehensive knowledge. On that account they are even superior to prophets, if the angels who bowed down before Adam (cf. *Qur'ân* II, 33) are left out of consideration (*Khizâna* 3). 'While the *jinn* predominate over the souls of soothsayers and communicate information to them, the angels of higher ranks predominate over the souls of prophets. From within their ranks, information is communicated from the World of divine Omnipotence (i.e. the *tajallî a'zam*)' (*Sat.* 20).

Though not explicitly stated, one of the deductions the Delhi savant seems to draw from the angels' possession of comprehensive knowledge is that they are considered to be the intellectual faculties of the human species and to perform for the latter the same function as the intellectual faculties do with regard to an individual of that species. In consequence of this, the angels provide the common Muslims believers with a much clearer notion of God than they would have without them: 'In short, the mental form "God", which we call a conception occurring in the mind, appears to be – in the light of deep thinking and revealing visions – the shadow of a divine form, which is fixed in the minds of the angels, and which is called *mala a'lâ* (Highest Council)' (*Sat.* 41).

Shâh Walî Allâh distinguishes the following four classes of angels:

Angels of the first and highest category possess souls that are breathed into luminous bodies 'at the time of very auspicious conjunctions of planets [...] By luminous bodies, fine elements are meant in which the substance of air dominates, which cannot be perceived by the faculty of seeing' (*Sat.* 43). These include:

- a) the angels nearest to God ('These are, in essence, the embodiment of divine planning in the world, and their shape is composed of material from the World of Prefiguration. Isrâfîl embodies the general planning of the godly Man meant for human individuals, while Mîkâ'îl encompasses the detailed planning. Both of them see to it that men gain a most reasonable sustenance and a good yield from their fields. Gabriel masters the planning aimed at the acquisition of comprehensive knowledge about laws and divine revelation' (*B.B.* 178 f.));
- b) the bearers of the Throne of God who are always praying for mankind¹³;
- c) the *mala a'lâ* (Highest Council) (These angels constitute one of the levels of the *`âlam al-arwâh* (world of immaterial entities) (*H.* XI). 'They can be distinguished into three types: those God created as luminous bodies on a par with the fire of Moses; those whose bodies are composed from a mixture of subtle vapours; those human souls who have perfected themselves to the extent that they can be reckoned among the angels' (*H.B.* I, 16). In Shâh Walî Allâh's system of belief the *mala a'lâ* play a foremost part in God's rule of humanity, since divine Providence proceeds along the following lines: 'The *tajallî a'zam*, whose function in the universe is comparable to that of the heart in man, reveals in the *mala a'lâ* indications relating to God's providential ordering (*`inâya*) with respect to the allotment of welfare in the world, to which pertain imminent occurrences, praise and blame with regard to deeds, sayings, beliefs and customs of men. Next, in the *mala a'lâ* these hidden indications become more explicit. Consequently, they assume a *mithâlî* (prefigurative) shape in the Holy Enclosure, that is to say the area, in which on the level of the *`âlam al-mithâl*, the *mala a'lâ* bring matters to an issue¹⁴. Then these *mithâlî* shapes are imprinted on the minds of human beings [...] Hence, two kinds of knowledge spring from their minds: firstly, knowledge of ethical categories [...]; secondly, knowledge of polemics to be used against heretics' (*Tafh.* I, 201 f.). In addition, these angels 'are imbued with knowledge of the divine Names and Attributes and with an understanding of the mysteries of the *`âlam al-jabarût* (World of Omnipotence)' (*H.B.* I, 26).).

The second class of angels Shâh Walî Allâh distinguishes consists of auxiliary angels, classed with the *mala safil* (Low Council). 'They consist of souls lesser in rank than those of the *mala a`lâ*, breathed into gaseous bodies at the time of fairly auspicious conjunctions of the planets [...] This group of angels is like a cross between minerals and animals¹⁵, as they have no specific form: one member is like a globe, a second like a turnip, a third like a triangle, the fourth like a quadrangle, and so on' (Sat. 43). 'Parallel to the abode of the *mala al-a`lâ*, there is another site (*hasîra*) on a lower level. It is the point to which the meditative concentrations of the *mala safil* turn. It is the centre of their affairs and the place where they receive their inspirations [...] By descending imperceptibly, God is marked there by affection for His worshippers, complying with some of their desires, and so on' (*Fuyûd* 25th Vision). 'You should know that the course of God's behaviour with reference to mankind is as follows. When an important matter has been predestined in the Unseen World and a concept of it has been imprinted on the minds of the *mala a`lâ*, the *mala safil* are informed of the affair' (*Izâla* I,34). 'Characteristic of the latter is that the sole occupation they are charged with is looking out for what may filter down of orders given by the *mala a`lâ* from above [...] Thus they come into action in the same way as birds and quadrupeds if urged by their instincts [...] Then they can influence the hearts of men and animals' (*H.B.* I,16) as well as the elements, as we may conclude from a passage in another work, in which these angels are said to operate in the universe by *ihâla* (effecting changes in elements). In that case their acting is mechanical, being 'not acquainted with the principle of universal expediency' (*H.* XVIII).

On the other hand, there is also a traffic stream in the opposite direction. In that case, the initiative comes from the part of human kind. This happens, for instance, when people desire to acquire the perfection of the *mala safil*. To this end, they should punctuously observe cultic purity, stay in old mosques where saintly people used to perform their prayers, recite the Qur'ân frequently and apply themselves to the *dhikr*-ritual, invoking Allâh's 99 most Beautiful Names or His 40 Best-known Names in a repetitive rhythm (*Fuyûd* 5th Vision). If they succeed in obtaining some of the abilities of the *mala safil* in this way, they may possess the faculties of *kashf* (inner revelation) and of *ishrâf* (thought reading) (*H.* XVIII).

The third class of angels Shâh Walî Allâh distinguishes consists of angels who represent protective models in behalf of the earthly species. 'At times', we read in *Lamha* 43, 'cosmic processes unite to cause a deluge and destroy the individuals of a whole species. Then those "models" start to plead before their Lord [...] for the preservation of their "images" on the earth. It is for this reason that Noah was ordered to take on board "a pair from every species" (*Qur'ân* XI, 40) and the Prophet rescinded his order to kill the dogs, declaring: "after all, they are just as much a community (*umma*)"' (Malik b. Anas, *Isti'dhân* 14).

The fourth class of angels Shâh Walî Allâh distinguishes consists of the guardian angels (*hafaza*). 'These are created in order to ward off the machinations of the Devil and to repel his dirty tricks. They strive for the good of men' (*B.B.* 179).

d) Tajalliyyât ('radiances' emanating from the fire by which God reveals Himself)

The *tajalliyyât* are the ways of drawing near to God that are embodied in religion. The term is derived from *Qur'ân* VII, 139: 'And when Moses' Lord manifested Himself (*tajalla*) on the Mount Sinai' (Sat. 36). The reason why God revealed Himself in this way to Moses is that 'bearing his fervid nature in mind, God endowed him with a theophany of fire' (*Ta'wîl* 50).

According to Shâh Walî Allâh, the *tajalliyyât* can be discerned by three means. In the first place, they can be discerned by means of the mental image, which is imprinted upon the conceptive faculties, being a representation of the conception itself. When a mystic concentrates upon the image he has of his Lord, an image corresponding to his belief is represented. That image becomes a means of revealing his Lord and an instrument to provide him with self-knowledge. In the second place, they can be discerned by means of the spiritual concentration (*himma*) of certain angels or people of a superior quality. When the latter endeavour by their *himma* to become an image of God, that image will be a theophany (*tajallî*). In the third place, they can be discerned by means of a minute particle (*daqîqa*) that stands in opposite correlation to the Divine Essence and is a likeness and a representation of It (*Lamha* 52). In a parallel passage this *daqîqa* is indicated as a *raqîqa* (subtle contact point). When a worshipper immerses himself completely in this point, he attains the theophany which is called *tajallî dhâtî* (disclosure of the Ultimate Reality) through self-annihilation (*Tafh.* I, 66).

The Delhi divine divides the *tajalliyyât* into three categories. The first category is that of the *tajalliyyât wujûdiyya*. Their essence is the manifestation of *wujûd* (Being), with respect to external substantiation, in forms belonging to the World of Divine Omnipotence as well as to the World of Contingency. Every manifestation is provided with special properties and distinct operations. The second category is that of the *tajalliyyât shuhûdiyya*. When the mystic concentrates energetically on God, Ultimate Reality is disclosed to him in different forms and predicaments. Every form and predicament of that Reality revealed to him is called a *tajallî*. This occurs in proportion to his knowledge of God. The third category is that of the *tajalliyyât*

kamâliyya. When someone who passes away from self into God has loosened himself from the demands of nature and has devoutly fixed his eyes on the World of Omnipotence, his soul will be coloured with the colour of the World of Omnipotence (*Tafh.* I, 261). In a more detailed explanation of this category of *tajalliyyât* the Delhi savant explains: 'Full happiness is allotted to a worshipper if God appears to him in the following manner. Firstly, His *tajallî* operates on his *nasama* (lower self) to cleanse it of wickedness. Next, when the *tajallî* is directed to the *nafs nâtiqa* (reasoning soul), the *himma* of the worshipper receives enlightenment. Then in all his doings his attention is focused on God and no longer on his own self. However, as soon as the *tajallî* is concentrated on his *`ayn thâbita* (archetypal individuality), his actions, perfections and stages on the *sûfî* Path are coloured by the colour of God (*Tafh.* II, 55).

e) *al-tajallî al-a`zam* (Most Supreme Theophany)

In the works of Shâh Walî Allâh, we note the following diverse statements about this concept. The descent of the *tajallî a`zam*, 'which manifested Itself in the heart of the *nafas Rahmânî* (i.e. the universe in the aggregate) before the determination of time and the appearance of the transitory world, was meant to attract the human souls to God as iron is attracted to a magnet' (*Maktub* 8). 'It is a depot of the realities of the Self-existent, and therefore also a depot of the *tajalliyyât* and a talisman of the wisdom of the Merciful God' (*Haw.* 5). 'It is a form that bears likeness to God' (*Sat.* 38), 'the shadow of the Divine Essence' (*Tafh.* I, 64) and 'an exemplary representation of It in the universe' (*Tafh.* I, 191). 'In the opinion of Ibn al-`Arabî the name of this reality is *al-haqîqa al-muhammadiyya*'¹⁶ (*Haw.* 7). 'The very existence of this *tajallî* shows that the Divine Essence has a will that brings about changes and continuous processes of renovation in the universe [...] Or to explain more precisely by a metaphor: the sun and its light are inseparable from each other; the light is coupled to the sun; the effects of the light, however, are temporary and consequently changing; thus at midday (and not, for example, at dawn), the light makes a stone hot and causes ice to melt' (*Sat.* 11). 'The *tajallî a`zam* is the heart of the universe and the mainstay of its affairs' (*Lamha* 58). Since the heart functions as the seat of religious apprehension in *sûfî* parlance, various kinds of knowledge appear to pour out from the *tajallî a`zam*, such as, for instance, knowledge about polemics with heretics (*Tafh.* I, 202). The *tajallî a`zam* has also a special relationship with the human soul. There is nothing closer to it than the *tajallî a`zam*. On that account it is the instrument most suited to the refinement of the soul. 'Hence all the Laws introduced by the prophets give a lucid exposition of mental concentration on the *tajallî a`zam*' (*A.Q.* 134). 'The *tajallî a`zam* as It manifests Itself in the universe assigns many Divine Attributes and can be named by many Names. Three of them, however, are basic, to wit:

- 1) *Allâh*; this Name refers to symptoms of personality and individuality;
- 2) *qâdir* (possessing strength); this Name denotes the power operating on all contingencies which are substantiated in the *nafas Rahmânî* ("Breath of the Merciful", i.e. the ever-spreading and self-unfolding existence which gives rise to contingent beings);
- 3) *`âlim* (knowing); this Name designates the presence of realities in the world emerging on the level of the Divine Mind' (*Haw.* 3).

'The *tajallî a`zam* has its own history, its specific periods, phases (*Lamha* 50) and different modes of being. As God states: "Every day He is in a new state of being" (*Qur'ân* LV, 29)' (*Tafh.* I, 116). In this connection Shâh Walî Allâh tells us the following story: 'At the time when the planning for the world had to be arranged, the heavens and the earth with all that was in them were still dusk like a dark night. Divine Wisdom then required that this "defect" should be removed and that this chaotic state should be changed into a good order. Therefore, a *tajallî*, by which the reality of the Self-existent could be revealed, became manifest in the *`âlam al-mithâl* [...] For (in the matter of the reality of God) man's conceptive faculty is in need of a source and a place of refuge. And this can only be the prototype of these *tajalliyyât*' (*Haw.* 2 and 5). Other details of this first appearance of the *tajallî a`zam* are found in *Tafh.* I, 191 f. and 209 where we read: 'That which in the beginning was manifested by the *tajallî a`zam* did not possess any qualification or epithet by which it could be identified or distinguished from that which was not equal to it [...] When the celestial spheres had been created [...] the first subtle substance (*latîfa*) in them was a dominant white light. In view of the fact that the *tajallî a`zam* (in this first period) was expressed by this dominant white light, its name was Yazdân (the Spirit who is the principle of good). Yet, someone to whom dominant lights like this one were disclosed, was only acquainted with the necessitation and realisation of things and with making assertions about reality. Hence, he did not discern good and bad [...] For prayer, man directed himself (at that time) towards the Yazdân of light.'

Next came the phase which Shâh Walî Allâh names *Lâhût* (World of absolute divine Transcendence). 'It was at the time of our leader Abraham that God manifested Himself in this manner. He forbade spiritual affiliations with the stars through Abraham. He abolished the science of talismans, magic pearls, and such [...] In this period, the prophets continuously obtained a direct contact with God for the benefit of the *milla*

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(religious community) along with the *tajallî*, which arose from the breasts of the angels. On them were poured out knowledge of practical wisdom, of legislation, of polemics, of remembering the favours of God and His days, of trials of faith (*fitan*), and so on' (*Tafh.* I, 193). 'After that, when the mission of Mohammed had been realised, a major part of the *`âlam al-mithâl* appeared and the phase of the Lâhût fell into the background. Now God assumed again another universal mode of being (*sha'n*). An important difference, however, between this externalization of the *tajallî a'zam* in the shape of the *`âlam al-mithâl* and the former two (i.e. of Yazdân and Lâhût) is that in the last two cases the Self-existent manifested Himself directly, whereas this first externalisation represents something that appears in a mirror. As soon as the *`âlam al-mithâl*, in which the retentive imagination (*khayâl*) is the dominant faculty, had been fully expanded, the revelatory process (*wahy*) stopped. As a consequence, the mental condition of the people in general degraded. They only understood the externals of the Law. Then knowledge descended prepared for man's reason, and was no longer destined for his *hajar al-baht* (gem of stupefaction) (a centre in the heart of man which functions as a telescope for the reception of light waves transmitted by divine radiations)¹⁷. So people began to discuss matters of grammar, syntax and Arabic poetry, and produced studies on *hadîth*, *tafsîr*, *fiqh* and *kalâm*' (*Tafh.* I, 193 & 198 f.).

Chapter three: Metaphysics

a) Concept of God

'In principle, theology is outside the range of human possibilities and beyond man's rational capacities: God is too lofty for analogies to be made of Him with what is thinkable or sensible' (*H.B.* I, 63). 'Those who try to describe Him resort to a variety of descriptions. Time flows on, and He cannot be described' (S.A. Ali, *The Medinian Letter*, Louvain 1977, 2). Therefore, 'it is not in the habit of prophets to encourage people to speculate on God's Essence and Attributes [...] The Holy Prophet only urged them to reflect on the blessings and mighty power of God' (*H.B.* I, 86).

Although the Essence of God actually surpasses human comprehension, it is nevertheless possible to obtain some cognition of God's Names through one's intuitive anticipation (*dhawq*), as Shâh Walî Allâh can confirm from personal experience. 'This is a completely bewildering discovery', so he testifies (*Khizana* 2). The exceptional benefit of being enabled to obtain acquaintance of divine Names is especially granted to sûfî gnostics (*Tafh.* I, 15).

While the apprehension of the divine Names, which in contrast to His Attributes are *mujarrad* (separate from bodily material), appears to be a privilege of a knowledgeable few unfortunately, familiarity with the divine Attributes, being notifications concerning God's transcendence, holiness, glory and majesty in a language comprehensible to the common man, lies within the compass of our ordinary reason (*Tafh.* I, 48). 'God gave reason some scope for using its own discretion in order to enable it to understand His Attributes' (A.Q. 64 f.). Acquaintance with God's Attributes is also required simply 'to enable ordinary minds to work towards their own perfection as best as they can' (*H.B.* I, 63). Attributes that evoke an image of divine Lordship are especially useful for the correction of human souls (*F.K.* 13). The particular utility of Attributes that describe certain aspects of God's Essence (as, for instance, living, self-subsistent, knowing) lies in the indication they give of God's planning (*tadbîr*) and of the best way to guard the order of the world (*Lamha* 49).

For an analysis of divine Attributes the following restrictive points should be taken into consideration. In the first place, the Attributes of God should be viewed in the light of their final development (i.e. as being realized in the empiric world where they fulfil needs according to the moment). They should not be taken in their primary import. Hence the meaning of *rahma* (divine mercy) is bestowing blessings, not compassion and mildness. In the second place, terms should be chosen for these Attributes indicating the way a king makes the city-state subservient, since God has rendered the whole of creation submissive. In the third place, anthropomorphisms can only be used on condition that they are not taken in their literal sense. They should merely bear the meaning they have in common parlance like, for instance, stretching out one's hand, which means in idiomatic language 'generosity'. Moreover, these anthropomorphisms should offer not the least occasion for the idea that animal slurs are cast on God's Essence. Hence one can say of God that He sees and hears, but not that He tastes and touches, because the latter two verbs have sexual connotations in Arabic. In the fourth place, one should make as much use as one can of comprehensive terms for Attributes, such as 'All-provider' and 'Fashioner of all existing things' (*H.B.* I, 63). In the fifth place, one should never term God the Universal (*kullî*), since the Eternal has no parts or whole. 'The ascription of wholeness to Him is a pleonasm. The whole is included in His Oneness [...] He has separated Himself from the universal that is imperfectly formed and awaiting His grace for its survival, and from the particular that is restricted and limited. The universal and particular are, in fact, categories used by our reason and products of our perception' (*B.B.* 101 f.). In the sixth place, one should reject the use of human attributes as confirmation of similar divine Attributes that might give occasion to false doctrines like ascribing to God a son, weeping, impatience, etc. (*F.K.* 13).

The Delhi divine had a double responsibility. On the one hand he had to enlighten the general public and on the other he had to initiate a spiritual elite into the mysteries of the Unseen World. A different approach to theological subjects was obviously required for each group. 'If the average people were allowed to speculate freely on God, they would go astray and would mislead others' (*H.B.* I, 64). In his instructive standard book *Hujjat Allâh al- bâligha*, Shâh Walî Allâh preserves reticence with regard to the Names and Attributes of God therefore. In his esoteric work *al-Khayr al-kathîr*, however, he takes the liberty of dwelling at length on the Names of God after having strongly dissuaded those who are not naturally gifted with a bright intellect from reading the book.

We are told the most fundamental aspect of the divine Names is the circular course they take: they depart from God's Essence, appear in the creation, and finally return to their starting point. For that reason Shâh Walî Allâh distinguishes between 'Starting Names' (*asmâ' bad'iyya*) and 'Returning Names' (*asmâ' `awdiyya*). Both categories of Names manifest themselves on different ontological levels. The more the lower Starting Names descend, the more they become 'unfolded', i.e. appear as particular configurations of

the Names on the preceding level. Consequently, they 'become like a polished mirror for the realities above them' (*Khizâna* 2). Conversely, the more the higher Returning Names rise, the more they 'condense' the configurations of the Names at a previous stage.

The Starting Names are found on six levels. The first is the level of *Huwa* (He). It points out that He is He, i.e. irrespective of any kind of relation. The only Name applicable to this stage is Allâh. The second is the level of Oneness. It concerns the Names *al-hayy* (the Living), *al-qayyûm* (He Who supports the cosmos), *al-haqq* (the Real) and *al-nûr* (the Light). They define the level of divine Essence and are configurations of it. The third is the level of Unity, i.e. the level of the *shu'ûn* (internal modes of being, calling for their externalisation). To this level belong the Names *al-majîd* (the Glorious), *al-`azîm* (the Inaccessible), *al-`alî* (the High), *al-kabîr* (the Great) and *al-jalîl* (the Majestic). They establish to some extent God's grandeur, which according to a statement ascribed to Mohammed (see Muslim, *al-Birr wa'l-Sila* 136) represents His cloak. The fourth is the level of unity-in-diversity (*wâhidiyya*). To this level belong the Names *al-ghanî* (the Independent), *al-wâsî* (the Omnipresent), *al-qawî* (the Strong), *dhu'l-tawî* (the All-sufficient) and *al-mubâarak* (the Beneficent). The fifth is the level of the Names of divine Love. This implies the Names *al-rahmân* (the Benefactor), *al-rahîm* (the Compassionate), *al-barr* (the Benefactor) and *al-qâdir* (Ordaining according to what wisdom requires). The sixth and last is the level of Names referring to the ever-renewing divine Will. To this level belong the particular Names *al-bâri'* (the Creator), *al-râziq* (the Sustainer), *al-musawwir* (the Bestower of forms), *al-hâdî* (the Guide), *al-ghaffâr* (the Indulgent), *al-qâbid* (the Restrainer), *al-bâsit* (the Dispenser), *al-khâfid* (the Abaser of the proud), *al-râfi'* (the Exalter of the believer), *al-mubdi'* (the Creator *ex nihilo*), *al-mu`id* (the Resuscitator), *al-muhyî* (the Creator of life) and *al-mumît* (the Creator of death).

Three strata are apportioned to the Returning Names. The first stratum encompasses the Names *al-`âlim* (the Knowing), *al-sâmî* (the Hearing), *al-khâbir* (the Sagacious), *al-basîr* (the Clairvoyant) and *al-shahîd* (the Witness). These Names are in fact so distant from God Himself that in the perspective of these Names He looks upon the world as being separate from Himself. The second stratum encompasses the Names *al-mâlik* (the King), *al-dâ'im* (the Everlasting), *al-muta`âlî* (the Exalted), *al-sabûr* (the Steadfast), *al-shakûr* (the Rewarder), *al-halîm* (the Forbearing), *al-rashîd* (the Leader who directs with justice), *al-hamîd* (the Praiseworthy), *al-bâqî* (the Eternal), *al-wâhid* (the One) and *al-wârith* (the One who remains after the creatures have perished). All that had been incongruous in the preceding stratum is now made harmonious. The Names of the third stratum are *al-quddûs* (the Holy), *al-salâm* (the Giver of peace), *al-samad* (the Impenetrable) and *al-subbûh* (the All-perfect). After this stratum there is only the Essence of God, into which these Names are ultimately absorbed.

In rounding off his exposition on the Starting and Returning Names, Shâh Walî Allâh summons the reader 'to behave in a humble and beseeching way towards the Returning Names. He is entitled to this, for the world is on the verge of passing away' (*Khizâna* 2).

Later on, as we can gather from a passage in the *Tafhîmât-i ilâhiyya*, the Delhi savant had to apologise for having overstepped his bounds by advancing the theories given above concerning all sorts of distinctions that one may make between the divine Names (*Tafh.* I, 49). So it should not surprise us to find a more traditional view of God's nature in this later work. Now he speaks of five categories of divine potencies, again proceeding from a low level to increasingly higher ones. The first is the level of the *idâfiyyât* (Attributes of correlation). They produce effects in the phenomenal world and are of all five categories the closest to created beings. The second is the level of the *sifât thubûtiyya* (steady Attributes). These have no special relation with the phenomenal world. To them belong the Attributes of life, hearing, sight and so on. The third is the level of the *shu'ûnât* (potential Attributes) which are folded up in the divine knowledge. Before Attributes are actualised they are *shu'ûn* (*in posse*). Hence they form the basis of the two categories mentioned above. The fourth is the level of the *salbî* (privative Attributes). They are twin and uterine brothers of the *shu'ûnât* but one step nearer to the *mafhûmât*, i.e. the level of mental images that is contrasted with the level of external realities. The fifth is the level of the Attribute of divine self-consciousness (*tahaqquq*). This is the mother of all Attributes and the center which unites all levels that reflect the divine revelatory radiance (*tajalliyyât*) (*Tafh.* II, 40). In the controversy about the primacy of 'substances' or 'adjectives' for the characterisation of God's Essence, Shâh Walî Allâh seems more disposed to accept the Mu'tazilite point of view¹⁸ than the notions prevalent among the Ash'arites. In a discussion of this delicate subject, he states that to his mind the standpoint of the *hukamâ' rabbâniyyûn* (scholars wise in divine matters) is the most plausible, since they maintain that the Knowing precedes knowledge and the Hearer the power of hearing. 'What fits best with their view is to say that in one respect the Name is identical with the 'object named' (*musammâ*), and in another respect the Name is neither identical with nor different from the *musammâ*' (*Khizâna* 1)¹⁹. Although the Delhi scholar holds the idea that God's being in the possession of knowledge, wisdom etc. is of secondary value, he nevertheless deems it relevant to discuss 'substance Attributes' separately.

The first 'substance Attribute' to which Shâh Walî Allâh turns his attention is the divine knowledge. 'God's knowledge', so he argues, 'is not like our knowledge. By means of our sensory perceptions we examine a thing in respect of its non-essential properties. Thus we find it under the aspect by which we look at it. By means of sacred knowledge, however, the Self-existent examines a thing with respect to its intrinsic constituents and the origin of its existence. In short, His knowledge comprises all that can be known, the universals as well as the particulars' (B.B. 102).

Accordingly, 'God knows Himself by *al-ilm al-hudûrî* (i.e. gaining consciousness of His Self). Included in that self-knowledge is knowledge of all His Attributes as well as of all things created by Him' (Tafh. II, 43). So it is possible to distinguish two aspects of divine Knowledge: one of a general (*ijmâlî*) character, which has to do with an inner urge towards self-consciousness and self-identification, and one that is concerned with details (*tafsîlî*), which has to do with location in being and the unfolding into modes of being (*shu'ûn*), which are differentiated into different contingent beings. In this way, knowledge is obtained concerning contingent beings that are found in the phenomenal world (Tafh. II, 50 f.).

The second 'substance Attribute' to which Shâh Walî Allâh turns his attention is the divine Will. 'The divine Will arose from God's desire to effect unity in the world order which emanated before the Will itself. And that is because there ought to be coherence between successive modes of existence. If unity of the world order is pursued, then such a coherent sequence of modes of existence must terminate in a Will that is an outflowing manifestation (*ifâda*). Thus the world order will have its point of union in this Will' (Khizâna 2).

A specific feature of this Will is its constant production of new manifestations. Daily events rely on it. In this way, from the breasts of the archangels who are responsible for the management of the creation, there is a continuous outflow of *al-asmâ' al-hâditha*, i.e. 'temporal' Names by which a proper course of events is brought about. In a tradition reported by Abû Hurayra we read: 'When a matter is decided by God in heaven, the angels flap their wings in submission to His word. The sound produced by their flapping resembles the sound produced by a chain pulled over smooth stones. When fright is removed from their breasts, they say to each other: "What on earth has your Lord said?" The reply given to them is: "He has spoken the truth. He is the Lofty, the Great One"' (Bu. *Tawhîd* 32). 'This tradition means', so Shâh Walî Allâh elucidates, 'that the archangels ask for detailed decrees (*qadar*) from the source of determination (*qadâ*) in the same way as prophets ask for knowledge from the source of the revealed law' (Khizâna 2).

Although an educationist by nature, the Delhi divine has no desire to reduce the significance of existential determination (*qadâ*): 'Existential determination is a truth imprinted on everybody, on people of the East as well as of the West, whatever their religion or creed, since it forms part of their ordinary knowledge [...] There are people who dare to contradict existential determination and are of the opinion that thereby the requital of good and evil for man is tantamount to injustice. For our part, we maintain that man's deeds and the requital resulting from them are all included in God's existential determination' (B.B. 111 f.). This tenet covers five stages. Firstly, God decided in pre-existence to bring the world into being, taking into consideration the salutary purposes effecting the good in relation to their time of coming into existence. Secondly, God registered the destinies of all created beings fifty thousand years before He created the universe. Thirdly, when God created Adam to be the father of the human race, He produced the moulds of the latter's descendants in the World of Prefiguration, deeming them capable of observing religious duties. Fourthly, when the spirit is breathed into a foetus, the accompanying angels come to know the future actions of a person, whether he will perform the acts of one whose angelic side overcomes his bestial side, or the opposite. And finally, before the occurrence of an event, the divine command descends from the Holy Enclosure to the earth and a prefigurative (*mithâlî*) form of the event is transferred. Thus God's decisions are spread over the earth. But this faith in God's absolute predetermining power does not produce a depressive effect on the believer, for it implies that thus 'man becomes alive to the universal planning which integrates the universe' (H.B. I, 65 f.). The prophetic saying: 'In His hand is the balance (*mîzân*) which may go down or rise (Bu. *Tafsîr sûrat al-Hûd*, ch. II), points at a divine planning which is based on choosing what is the most expedient. If conflicting processes are at work in something that is about to occur, then God takes decisive action in order to carry through an equitable adjustment' (H.B. I, 167).

Shâh Walî Allâh certainly allows some flexibility in the application of this dogma however by distinguishing between two different kinds of predetermination: an irreversible one and one left in suspense. The first one refers to the disposition of the universe as a whole. Its predeterminate course brooks no delay. The second one refers to the disposition of the human individual. Accordingly, prayer of invocation (*du`â*) and planning (*tadbîr*) are of use for him. As to the latter possibility, it is preordained for every embryo what age it will reach, but spurs provided from outside figure in this predestination. Such spurs, including pious goodness and behaving with consideration, lengthen one's life (Khizâna 3). In respect of the prayer of invocation, Shâh Walî Allâh points out: 'Sometimes it is disclosed to a gnostic (*`ârif*) that there is a pre-determination (*qadâ*) attached to something, indicating that it will happen in such a manner and that the

decree (*qadar*) of it appears irrevocable. Then this gnostic puts a fervent *du`â`* to God and persists in praying until the decree is changed and something different happens in accordance with the gnostic's inner drive (*himma*) to ascend as high as possible on the path towards God' (*Fuyûd* 38th Vision). Still the *du`â`* has its limitations, since 'the *du`â`* is merely of use to what is not fixed by an irrevocable divine decree. So [...] the *du`â`* of Abraham on behalf of his father and the *du`â`* of Noah on behalf of his son were not answered, because the disbelief of the two for whom intercession was made was already predestined' (*Tafh.* II, 108).

The third 'substance Attribute' to which Shâh Walî Allâh turns his attention is the divine Speech (*kalâm*). It is the basis of the revealed Law and the origin of prophetic revelation (*wahy*) (*Khizâna* 2). *Wahy* is inspiration into the mind by means of a dream or creation of indispensable knowledge while someone is concentrating his mind on the Unseen World (*H.B.* I, 65). The Speech of God is 'one of the planes of the divine Will, if viewed as an outpouring into the regions of divine consciousness. In the outpouring of Speech, a sacred form is granted to each actuality [...] Further, God speaks only by means of the outpour of meaningful concepts which sound in the ears of the hearers like real speech and audible letters²⁰. This is what Shaykh Abu'l-Hasan al-Ash`arî refers to when saying the Speech of God is an "internal Speech" (*kalâm nafsî*, i.e. Speech without words)' (*Khizâna* 2).

A noteworthy quality inherent in divine Names is their capacity to produce an accordant effect on human individuals. This happens in the process called *tahaqquq bi-asmâ`i`llâhi* (self-realization by means of God's Names): 'By *tahaqquq* is to be understood', so Shâh Walî Allâh sets forth, 'that the worshipper passes away from himself and gains a permanent relationship with God [...] Subsequently, Names of God enter into him. Thus powers of those Names are manifested in his soul and the universe is submitted to him in accordance with those powers' (*Tafh.* I, 230). There are various sorts of *tahaqquq*. These include in the first place '*tahaqquq* by being acted upon and by receiving an effect, as e.g. happens with Names like *al-mughnî* (the Enricher from whom creatures derive their perfection), *al-mu`tî* (He who gives) and *al-mun`im* (the Benefactor) [...] Then a gnostic often turns the face of the mirror of his heart towards these Names by reciting them or by concentrating on their realities as they are substantiated as luminous bodies in the World of Prefiguration [...] Accordingly, it is implied by divine wisdom that at that time God makes earthly processes subservient so that he becomes somebody who is provided with material or spiritual possessions' (*Tafh.* I, 232). These include furthermore: '*tahaqquq* by assimilation, as for instance happens with Names like *al-`azîz* (the Powerful), *al-`azîm* (the Determined) [...] Then a gnostic often recites such Names or concentrates on their realities as they are substantiated in the World of Prefiguration [...] so that on account of that a connecting link, deposited in him in an opposite correlation to this particular Name, is eventually activated' (*Tafh.* I, 232).

From actual experience Shâh Walî Allâh was acquainted with this second kind of *tahaqquq*: 'as one of the favours of God to me. Once a *tahaqquq* occurred to me with the Name *al-hayy* (the Living), that is to say that I witnessed its reality substantiated in the "Holy Enclosure" [...] Consequently, I settled down in the forces of the celestial spheres and chose from them the force ascribed to the planet Venus. Thereupon Venus came down to me while I took that force as companion. So Venus added a bit of the duration of the age as foreordained to me in the womb of my mother' (*Tafh.* I, 233).

b) Cosmology

Placing the issue of creation in a historical context the Delhi scholar sets forth that at all times people have tried to coin for the relation between God and the universe the nearest simile and clearest metaphor. Various suggestions have been made. Greek philosophers spoke of *uqnûm* (transcendental aspect) and *sanam* (corporeal form); others (sc. the Hindus) used the term *hulûl* (God's indwelling in creatures); while a third group, the Christians, believed in divinity's putting on the dress of man. On the one hand, such expressions afford some clarification, on the other hand they may also obscure the issue; or rather, the mischief they produce is greater than the benefit that can be derived from them [...] because they led the common people to think all sorts of *kufîr*' (*Sat.* 45).

Relating the 27th Vision, with which he was favoured during his stay in al-Haramayn, Shâh Walî Allâh records: 'While I was waiting for an elucidation of the tradition in which the Messenger of God was asked by Abû Razîn al-Uqaylî: "Where was our Lord before He created the creation?" and replied: "He was in the dark mist (*`amâ`*) with no air below Him and no air above Him", the following mystery was disclosed to me: A glaring light spread over the whole area of the remote world of *`amâ`*, i.e. the realm of primordial matter. This light (i.e. the *tajallî a`zam*), he explains, is the first manifestation and *locum tenens* of the divine Essence, and the jet d'eau of the powers of the Self-existent. It is anterior to time and has a firm grip on not-yet existence (*`adam*), in which continuously renewing issues of the divine Will (required by the changing conditions of time), are manifested. When afterwards I kept reflecting on this, I suddenly realized that for the divine Essence it is necessary to reveal the potentialities (*istî`dâdât*) it envelops. Subsequently,

at that place on the ontological level of the Self-subsistent the potentialities of the divine Essence appeared in a mental shape. Through this appearance, three kinds of entities were formed at that level:

- 1) the latent realities (*a'yân*) of the things contingent;
- 2) the modes of being (*shu'ûn*) the Self-existent reveals in every genre of existence;
- 3) the epiphanic forms (*barzât*) of the universal theophany of the Self-existent.

More details of *al-'amâ'* are supplied in another passage of Shâh Walî Allâh's writings. There he expounds: '*Amâ'* is the disposition existent in primary matter, i.e. the capacity to assume all incorporeal and corporeal forms. It subsists in al-Rahmût⁴ (realm of al-Rahmân) [...] It is like a mirror for the Rahmût in which the latter shows its beauty. By virtue of this quality it is called "primordial matter"; but in view of its being sustained by al-Rahmût it is named "body"; and in respect of its being the origin of all phenomena (*âthâr*) it is called Universal Nature (*tabî'a kulliyya*)' (*Tafh.* I, 158).

When within the *tabî'a kulliyya* the elements and celestial spheres came into being the individual peculiarities, requirements and powers of the *tabî'a kulliyya* were imparted to those elements and celestial spheres. When thereafter the minerals, plants, animals and man originated, the nature of the elements and celestial spheres was transferred into them. In consequence of this, the former (minerals, plants, animals and man) function merely as mirrors in order to reflect the individual peculiarities and movements of the celestial spheres as well as the nature of the elements' (*Fuyûd* 11th Vision; *Ta'wîl* 104 f.).

In addition to individual characteristics of celestial spheres (*aflâk*), earthly events and psychic experiences can mirror peculiarities of planets (*sayyârât*). Thus, for instance, 'inspirations from above descending upon perfect people may take with them the influence emanating from a special planet. In the Gospels a story is told with the following contents: Once there were sellers of doves in the temple. This enraged God. He made the soul of Jesus an instrument for the transmission of His wrath. With a lot of trouble Jesus succeeded in obtaining a colt, which he mounted. The disciples accompanied him as a body guard. In this way they reached the temple. He rebuked the dove-sellers severely. And the fear of God fell upon them. They stopped their activities, and some of them took to flight. This was one of the most important events announced by former prophets: by talking of a rider on an ass (see Zechariah IX, 9) they had hinted at this manifestation of Jesus. When this occurred there was the planet Jupiter standing in the sign of the Pisces hidden in the physical constitution of Jesus' (*Haw.* 36). And if parts of Saturn become operative, the ties of an advanced gnostic with this world and the next are severed while the colour of the 'Love of the divine Essence' spreads over him. When he is connected with parts of the sun, his capacity to subject and rule increases. He becomes a *tadallî* (means to facilitate people's spiritual evolution) of God on behalf of His creation, and an elixir for someone who seeks a cure as soon as contact is established with the cosmic reality that correlates with Saturn standing in conjunction with Jupiter (*Fuyûd* 26th Vision).

Minerals, plants, animals and man as such are actually material forms characterised by specific effects. Thus the mineral form is in its structure peculiar to the four earthly elements and in its essence to the celestial spheres; the vegetable form is peculiar to all that which grows from water and earth and to what is produced by itself and by its own kind; the animal form possesses the faculties of sensation, movement, will and acting on a decision of the heart; the human form is marked by the use of speech, having the potential to evolve socially and economically, doing most excellent works, and coming to resemble fully the Origin of all existence. The most noble form, however, is the *nafs nâtiqa* (reasoning soul) constituting personal identity: by it Zayd is Zayd and 'Amr 'Amr (*B.B.* 16).

Apart from the tradition of Abû Razîn al-'Uqaylî's interview of the Prophet, the Qur'ânic imagery of al-Rahmân Himself sitting upon the Throne (*Qur'an* X, 3) is used by the Delhi divine in elucidation of what is to be understood by cosmogony. al-Rahmân (the Merciful One) is God's most significant Name, the 'seal' of the Names, and encompasses all realities which arise from non-being (*B.B.* 13). 'It is the channel through which by means of eternal theophanies the divine Essence proceeds to endow the universe with stability and realization' (*Tafh.* I, 51). So providential ordering (*'inâya*) and planning descend from al-Rahmân (*B.B.* 25). It is to be designated as the first outpouring entity. In reality, it is the result of *subûgh*, a being overfilled with the divine Essence which, like an overflowing fountain⁵ vomits foam (*Tafh.* II, 39). By the Peripatetics it is called *al-'aql al-fa'âl* (active Intelligence) (*Tafh.* I, 46). Yet, Shâh Walî Allâh deems the assertion that the existence of the universe rests upon the *'aql fa'âl* a not very felicitous way of putting it. In general, he is not in favour of assuming the existence of intelligences as being a kind of creative and regulating powers that govern the universe, as is affirmed by the same philosophers. 'To be frank', he declares, 'there is no need of an intermediary, consisting of intelligent substances in which the form of things would be stamped. Such substances are merely hypothetic matters, existing only in the mind of the person who has invented them' (*Fuyûd* 45th Vision). The Delhi scholar also rejects the view of the common man who is under the erroneous belief that the world subsists on its own and is established as an isolated item. On the contrary, the world is to be regarded as an exemplary representation projected from the side of the Self-existent and an illustration of His perfection (*Khizâna* 1). God created it like He is Himself, i.e. purely good. So it enables

Him to display His beauty (*Tafh.* I, 158). Hence, when the Creator fell in love with Himself, the creation appeared; the object of love was His own beauty (*Tafh.* I, 10 f.).

al-Rahmân sat Himself upon the Throne which is upon the waters. The Throne is the origin of the forms which come to inhere in matter. Water is the source of matter, inasmuch as a typical trait of its capability is to take on any form (*Khizâna* 3). The first thing al-Rahmân decreed by means of the Throne in respect of water was the creation of the elements and the celestial spheres (*afflâq*). The spheres can function as corporeal forms of an agent (*fâ'il*) and the elements as corporeal forms of a recipient (*qâbil*) (*Tafh.* I, 46). Subsequently, matter which is fit for a mineral form cohered from the elements and condensed. With matter in this receptive condition a mineral form flowed over it from al-Rahmân⁶. In the course of time the mineral form became receptive in its turn. In this receptive state it turned to al-Rahmân holding out its hand like a beggar, extending fervent supplications to Him for a further evolution. Thereupon the more complex vegetable form flowed over it from al-Rahmân. Thus, due to its material constitution life of the lowest type emerged. After that, according to the same procedure al-Rahmân poured down the animal and human forms. A fully developed type of life became the result of the outpouring of the animal form, while resemblance with the Origin was the fortunate issue of the flow of the human form from al-Rahmân (*Tafh.* I, 122; *B.B.* 18 f.).

After having gained its full expansion, the evolutionary process itself has not yet attained its final point. In contrast to the Western theory of evolution, Shâh Walî Allâh maintains that the universe with everything it contains pass through a cycle: Everything emanated from al-Rahmân is ultimately absorbed again into al-Rahmân. In reference to this conception of the universe he relates the legend of the phoenix: 'I have to come to know that in the most remote parts of India there is a bird with a long neck [...] called *qaqnus* (phoenix). It [...] continually changes from one state into another. When still being very young love stirs up from within its heart, and it begins to sing. Then it is so moved by the song that it is filled with ecstasy, and is itself at last consumed by fire [...] Then the spring rain falls upon its ashes and lo! another bird arises. This process goes on *ad infinitum*' (*Lamha* 17). Well then, in exactly the same way there is a continuous succession of *dawrât*, cycles of worlds which alternately arise and decline. Hence, as soon as the appearance of the most refined form, i.e. the human individual, has been effected, a process of decay sets in: 'all existing things fade away, so that only the Throne and the water remain. Next, the wind of annihilation begins to whip these two also, on account of which they too become non-existent [...] Thus the realm of being becomes waste and empty. Then after a period of complete emptiness, al-Rahmân makes a fresh start and displays His activity of outpouring (*jûd*). Consequently, He recreates heaven and earth as they had been before. The calculation of such a cycle (*dawra*) is not given to man, and not even to a heavenly agent' (*Tafh.* I, 46 f.). Though the notion of cyclical time is not unknown in Islam, it is more likely that in this case Shâh Walî Allâh is influenced by Indian thought with its primordial rhythm of creation-destruction-creation *ad infinitum* (M. Eliade in *Eranos Yearbooks*, New York 1957, vol. 3, p. 179), since he does not speak of cycles of manifestation alternating with cycles of concealment as propounded by Ismâ'îlî cosmologists.

Again another much less spectacular cosmological approach we discover in the discussion concerning the ontological difference between *thubût* (latent transcendental determination fixed in and by the divine Mind) and *wujûd* (approaching phenomenal reality). The Delhi savant expounds that this can be sensualized in the seed of a tree. The tree itself is latently determined before it is actually found in the world outside. The universe itself, we should further ascertain, passes through three ontological levels. Necessitated by God, it is first at the level of the divine Mind, i.e. the stage of *thubût*. Next, it enters an intermediate level, called *al-nafs al-kullîyya*, i.e. the stage of *wujûd*. Arriving at this level, it can neither be described as properly 'eternal' because it has left the divine Mind, nor can it be regarded as 'created' because it has not yet acquired existence in fact. After that, the universe descends into the realm of matter and becomes manifested in bodily forms (*Tafh.* I, 107 f., 159, 165 & 192).

Among the various designations Shâh Walî Allâh uses for the universe, the most characteristic one is certainly *al-shakhs al-akbar* (the Most Large Person). The idea that the universe is to be regarded as an enlarged version of man is in the Muslim context not very original. At most the term itself might be called original. Muslim thinkers and gnostics prefer to qualify the universe as *al-insân al-kabîr* ('meganthropos'). The witnessed and verifiable realities, so the Delhi scholar explains, are actually 'one Person', emanating from one Principle, having one system which sustains the Person just as the system of growth and nutrition sustains a single plant (*B.B.* 12). The *âlam al-mithâl* functions as the intellectual centre of this Most Large Person; the *hazîra al-quds* serves as the faculty by which It is enabled to participate in the knowledge of Its Lord (*Fuyûd* 4th Vision); on Its mind falls the *tajallî a'zam* (i.e. reflections of Its creator) so that divine notions enter Its brain; the *nafs kullîyya*, the animating principle of the sensible world, stands for Its *rûh* (vital principle) while the celestial spheres, elements and three kingdoms of nature represent the organs of Its body. In addition to this, It also disposes of a *nasama* (airy spirit) which flows in the organs of Its body, i.e. the elements and the spheres. This *nasama* is in the possession of three faculties:

- 1) an intellectual one which attends to the issue of planning (*tadbîr*);
- 2) a physiological one: there is no body which can dispense with heat or cold;
- 3) a stimulative one that impels the other two faculties to action (*Tafh.* I, 46 & 53).

The Most Large Person may exhibit remarkable human features, but Its likeness with the Divine is even more striking. Does not a tradition beloved by the sûfîs mention that man is created in the image of al-Rahmân (Bu. *Isti'dhân* 1)? So Shâh Walî Allâh thinks himself justified to advance the daring statement: 'With God the universe has a cohesion of a rather esoteric nature so that in a state of rapture one may presume that the universe be identical with God' (*Tafh.* II, 42).

The most simple approach Shâh Walî Allâh pursues in expounding cosmological processes is the classification in the categories of *ibdâ'*, *khalq*, *tadbîr* and *tadallî*. As in the case of the evolutionary process of elemental, vegetative, animal and human forms, these four phases are direct continuations of each other. Each of them builds on the previous one: '*ibdâ'* has *khalq* as complement, while *tadbîr* is the completion of *khalq*' (*Lamha* 35).

'*ibdâ'* (absolute origination) is the effusion of a thing from the nothing preceding into self-realization (*tahaqquq*) [...] Ultimately, *ibdâ'* rests on the divine necessity of God's expressing Himself' (*Lamha* 34). The first thing called into existence is the *haqîqa Muhammadiyya* (Reality of Mohammed), from which all other essential realities are ramified (*Fuyûd* 45th Vision). It is the stretched cord by which the whole universe is firmly tied (*Fuyûd* 16th Vision). Other objects created *ex nihilo* are the Pen (typification of divine operative knowledge), the Tablet (typification of divine receptive knowledge), the Throne (representing the source of *tadbîr*) and the primordial water (depicting the material for the creation of heaven and earth) (*Tafh.* I, 55).

Khalq (the bringing into existence from an existing thing), the final issue of *ibdâ'* (*Ta'wîl* 63), 'denotes a free disposal over matter and form so that many forms materialize'. As a result the celestial spheres, elements and all species endowed with their characteristics and effects came into being (*Lamha* 34 f.). Forms, however, are phenomena defiled by the limitations of time, place and condition (*B.B.* 17 f.). Consequently, *khalq* consists of a gushing forth of impure entities that belong to the transient world (*Khizâna* 1), and is in fact an inferior activity which is not properly applicable to the divine Essence (*Tafh.* I, 47).

Next, as a sequel to *khalq* there is the divine creational activity of *tadbîr* (planning). It works effective changes in the world so that what happens in it is in conformity with universal expediency. Accordingly, for instance, God causes rain to come down from a cloud to produce vegetables for men and cattle (*H.B.* I, 12).

Tadallî (descending after being high as said of Gabriel when he approached Mohammed: *Qur'ân* LIII,8), the complement of divine creativity, representing God's coming to the rescue when universe or mankind have run into trouble. It results in disclosure of knowledge, right guidance and perfection of souls, and presupposes the establishment of patterns by which people's welfare is insured (*Lamha* 34). 'It is actually a means of facilitating men's spiritual evolution' (*Fuyûd* 3rd Vision). One of its products is the *Qur'ân* (*Tafh.* I, 185). *Tadallî* is based on matters accepted unreservedly and easily verifiable. Hence the Messenger of God was not an angel, the Holy Book not written in a language foreign to the Arabs, and the Ka'ba not built of light (*Fuyûd* 4th Vision). The *tadallî* itself is of many periods and phases. In the beginning of our history events were determined by the powers of celestial spheres and elements only. The inaugurator of this epoch is said to have been Hermes Trismegistos, the Greek name applied to the Egyptian god Thoth. To him are ascribed works on astrology, medicine, alchemy and magic. It is in this age that knowledge of the movements of the stars and their peculiarities welled up in the brain of Idrîs (Hermes). In this era the *milla* (institutionalized religion) of the *majûs*, the fire worshippers, came into existence, and the sciences pursued were astrology, medical art, and black magic. Thus some time elapsed. Then angels started to appear gradually. By the time they had become numerous and their knowledge and will power had developed harmoniously, the laws of astrology became more and more inoperative. From now on the 'restraint' and 'letting loose' of causal processes were the business of the *mala a'la*. Accordingly, Abraham, the inaugurator and exponent of this second epoch, awakened to the insight that it would be better to divert from the stars and to concentrate henceforward upon the *mala a'la*. In the course of time men fell into the tight grip of the angels. They became devoted to God by *salât*, ritual purity, belief in the angels, heavenly books and messengers of God. The Ka'ba came to function as a substitute of a former temple of the sun and the moon. In this age the *milla* of the *hanîfs* (followers of the original monotheistic religion) was established. Due to the steady adherence of the will power of succeeding prophets to the angels, the influence and moment of the *'âlam al-mithâl* where the *mala a'la* reside, increased continuously. When at last Mohammed appeared on earth, the sky, heaven and earth were completely filled with the *mithâlî* form of the *tadallî*. Consequently, if at present somebody wishes to acquire *'ilm, ma'rifa* (gnosis), or a divine perfection, this *mithâlî* form, i.e. the spiritual shape of Mohammed (as may appear in dreams), is for him the most appropriate source (*Lamha* 50, *Tafh.* I, 66 ff.). And in as much in the future the lights of the *mala a'la* will accumulate and their number will grow, the knowledge of God in this earth will become increasingly

penetrating and intimate. The Prophet himself has hinted at this subtle point in his statement: When the time of Resurrection gets near, the visions of the believer will be rarely hallucinatory (Mu. *Ru'yâ* 6) (*Fuyûd* 15th Vision).

c) **Wahdat al-wujûd (Unity of Being)**

If one finds it difficult to analyze and reconstruct Shâh Walî Allâh's ontological ideas, it is indeed comforting to discover that the Delhi divine himself appears to have difficulty in defining *wujûd* (being). The nature of *wujûd*, so he notes, has no contrary, and since we know things only by their opposite, it is difficult to find out what exactly *wujûd* is supposed to be (*Lamha* 9). On the other hand, Shâh Walî Allâh repeatedly declares that *wujûd* is a matter, a quality that can be conceptualized. Thus '*wujûd* becomes conceivable by what is in front of it, i.e. in case the realities which are the source of many different effects are surveyed in a comprehensive way [...] Such an observation forms in the mind a concept of what is termed *wujûd*' (*Lamha* 2). In short, *wujûd* is an entity confirmable in the quiddities (*mâhiyyât*), in the opinion of Shâh Walî Allâh the equivalent of actual entities (*Lamha* 8).

In the controversial matter of whether *wujûd* and *mâhiyya* are identical or distinct, the Delhi scholar notes a fundamental difference between God on the one side and the contingents (*mumkinât*) on the other side. 'The *wujûd* of the Self-existent', so he states, 'is identical with His Essence (*dhât*) in the sense that His Essence is *wujûd* and *wujûd* is *mâhiyya*' (*Tafh.* I, 168). On the level of conceptual analysis, however, *wujûd* in contingent beings is distinct from *mâhiyya*, so that 'in our minds we can conceive of the quiddity of something and at the same time doubt its actual existence, and we can think of *wujûd* independently of *mâhiyya*' (*Lamha* 8).

The *mâhiyyât* (quiddities), he maintains, are actually embedded in two categories of *wujûd*:

1) integral *wujûd* which spreads (*munbasit*) over the structural forms of the things existent (*mawjûdât*) in the external world⁷, and precedes the actual entities (i.e. the *mâhiyyât*). Actual entities are, in fact, devolutions and moulds of integral *wujûd* as such. They are the outcome of a link - of which the existence is known but the quality unknown - between the ever-spreading *wujûd* and the quiddities, which are modes of being (*shu'ûn*) and epistemic forms (i.e. *a'yân thâbita*) of this ever spreading *wujûd*;

2) *wujûd* which is derived (*muntaza'*) from a comprehensive examination of the actual entities (*Maktûb* 11 f.). For, 'in front of it there is something which can be ascertained empirically (*Khizâna* 1). In other words, being of this kind is not an invention of one's fancy (*Lamha* 9), and not without actuality; rather it is a reality since it is derived from many realities (*Lamha* 2). According to Shâh Walî Allâh, the term *wujûd* can also be taken in two other senses:

1. *wujûd* that is a *se* (*fî nafsîhi*). It is the outcome of *tahaqquq* (divine self-consciousness), *taqarrur* (divine self-objectivation) and turning into a 'thing' (i.e. the Absolute obtains 'thingness').

2. *wujûd* that is *ab alio* (*bi-ghayrihi*). This is *wujûd* 'by way of a trope only' (*bi-tarîq al-majâz*), i.e. seeming. At first sight one may think that *mâhiyyât* endowed with both substance and accidents are embodiments of *wujûd* that is a *se*. But on further consideration it appears that contingent being has no share in *wujûd* that is a *se*. It is, in fact, nonexistent by itself and of no account. Only by an '*illa* (effective cause) - and that is location in being - it can become a phenomenon (*Tafh.* II, 50).

Further, in *wujûd* different levels can be distinguished possessing, so to speak, various degrees of light quantum, in the same manner as the intensity of sunlight differs from that of moonlight. The highest proportion of *wujûd* is found in the powers of Lâhût (the World of divine Essence). Next comes the level of *al-wujûd al-aqlî* (Being in the cognitive existence), i.e. the stage at which God becomes conscious of Himself. Then follows the level of *wujûd munbasit*, i.e. the First Emanation. Linked with it is the level of the spheres and elements. At last we have the level of the three kingdoms of nature (animal, vegetable and mineral) whose relation to the spheres and elements is like the relation that boils, swellings, fever and headache have to the body of man (*Lamha* 24).

At the very outset of his divinely appointed mission, however, Shâh Walî Allâh still seems to be somewhat reserved towards the aspirations of the *wahdat al-wujûd* adherents, as we may gather from the first vision vouchsafed him during his stay in Haramayn. In this vision he is invited to act as an arbitrator between two rivalling parties, to wit people who practise *dhikr* and *yâd-dâsht* (constant concentration on God) and advocates of *wahdat al-wujûd*. In his verdict he accuses both parties of one-sidedness and incompleteness. The major shortcoming of the latter is their deficiency in the praise and love of God and their insufficient awareness of God's transcendence. Consequently, their souls do not become refined and they do not attain to their potential perfection (*Fuyûd* 1st Vision).

But later, when the Delhi divine is asked for a second time to pronounce an opinion on a controversy involving the ontological ideas of Ibn al-'Arabî, he appears to have come very close to the latter's position. This is no subject for surprise, because since the days of his sojourn in Haramayn he had increasingly adopted in his own expositions the vocabulary of the mystic philosopher whom he held in such high esteem:

'Ibn al-`Arabî's range of spiritual knowledge is more vast than that of any other protégé of God (*walî*)' (*Tafh.* II,33).

It was a letter from an acquaintance, named Afandî Ismâ`îl b. `Abd Allâh al-Rûmî al-Madanî, which induced Shâh Walî Allâh to reconsider his position with regard to the doctrine of *wahdat al-wujûd* and to compose a monograph on it. The question put to Shâh Walî Allâh in the letter was whether it would be possible to bring about a reconciliation between the concept of *wahdat al-wujûd* entertained by Ibn al-`Arabî and his followers, and the doctrine of *wahdat al-shuhûd* (unity-in-experience, wherein everything but God goes out the mystic's consciousness) held by Ahmad al-Sirhindî (1564 - 1624) and Mîrzâ Mazhar Jânjânân (1700 - 1781).

First of all, so the Delhi savant argues in the study asked for, one should recognize that *wahdat al-wujûd* and *wahdat al-shuhûd* are terms referring to two different matters, i.e. :

1. discussions about mystic experiences. One might say that this sûfî has attained the stage of *wahdat al-wujûd* and another one the stage of *wahdat al-shuhûd*. In the first case one is immersed in the all-encompassing Reality, in which the world is absorbed in such a manner that all ethical values, on which knowledge of good and evil is based and of which revelation and reason offer an explicit explanation, may be hidden from one's observation. Mystics sometimes remain at this stage till God rescues them from it. *Wahdat al-shuhûd* implies that lover and Beloved are joined together but their individuality is preserved. This stage is higher and more perfect than the former;

2. ontological questions. Here metaphysicians reflect on the relation between the transient and the eternal. According to one group of them it is like this: The world consists of accidents which have their point of meeting in one and the same substance, in the same way as waxen models of man, a horse and an ass possess wax as common substance. The nature of wax remains the same under all conditions. Although the models would have no existence at all if wax were not added to them, they are named after the form they assume. According to another group of metaphysicians the whole point is, that the world consists of a series of emanations from the divine Names and Attributes reflected on mirrors of antipodal nonentities, like power being the antipodal entity of weakness. Thus when the light of divine Power is reflected on the mirror of weakness, the latter becomes contingent power. The same applies to the other Attributes. This is also the situation with *wujûd*. The theory of the first group is called *wahdat al-wujûd*, and that of the second *wahdat al-shuhûd* (*Maktûb* 5 ff.).

Typical of Shâh Walî Allâh's mentality is that he rather prefers to argue in favour of a reconciliation between both theories. To that end three points ought to be taken into consideration:

a) one should realize that presumed disagreements between the ontological views of Sirhindî and Ibn al-`Arabî are, in essence, a question of terminology; they do not touch the very root of the matter. 'It is a mistake to surmise that Ibn al-`Arabî and his followers, or even the learned, would not endorse the teaching of *wahdat al-shuhûd* as is explained above. That is because, when all tropes and metaphors which impede proper understanding are cleared away, the sum of this theory is that the contingent realities are insignificant and deficient, whereas the Reality of the Self-existent is most perfect and significant, so that the conclusion is obvious that the contingent realities are non-entities and that the various forms of the things existing are (as is taught by Ibn al-`Arabî c.s.) manifested in the Reality of the Self-existent (*Maktûb* 7)8.

b) It is absolutely necessary that Ibn al-`Arabî's views are properly interpreted. Unfortunately, in the course of time confusion and misunderstanding of what is implied by *wahdat al-wujûd* arose on account of incorrect conclusions and erroneous explanations of Ibn al-`Arabî's teachings. Not only Sirhindî but also faithful followers of the Shaykh al-akbar are guilty of such misconstructions. Among the latter Sadr al-Dîn al-Qûnawî (d. 1263) and `Abd al-Rahmân Jâmî (d. 1492) are particularly to be blamed. From the *wahdat al-wujûd* concept they drew the mistaken inference that *al-wujûd al-munbasit* (the First Emanation) is identical with the Self-existent. In this way they fail to differentiate between the One who manifests Himself (*zâhir*) and that which is manifested (*mazhar*) (*Khizâna* 2).

As for the occasional divergences from Ibn al-`Arabî's views which Shâh Walî Allâh notices in Sirhindî's dissertations, he first of all reproaches his harbinger<sup>9</sup> for citing at times Ibn al-`Arabî incorrectly in his volumes of letters called *Maktûbât* (*Tafh.* I, 169). Further, Shâh Walî Allâh prefers to use Ibn al-`Arabî's technical terms instead of those coined by Sirhindî, as he regards it of little use to study metalanguage (*istilâh*) devised by the latter (*Tafh.* I, 169). It is certainly significant that as soon as Sirhindî avows to differ from Ibn al-`Arabî, the Delhi scholar immediately shows partiality for the latter: 'There are statements of Sirhindî in which he says that he has found assertions of Ibn al-`Arabî and his followers which he considers to run counter to his own sentiment'. When declaring this, so he concludes, Sirhindî commits a 'lapse of thought'; but, so he adds in extenuation, it is excusable: 'Scholars may commit lapses, yet this does not need to detract from their prestige' (*Maktûb* 28);

3) contradictory theories about the relation between God and the universe can also be reconciled, if one recognizes that its authors are like the blind men of the parable. By touching and tasting various parts of a

tree they tried to discover its nature. One of them gets hold of a leaf, another of a branch, again another of a flower, and a fourth one of the fruits. Reporting on their findings, one says: 'The tree consists of smooth parts'; another states: 'No, it is something like a bunch of twigs'; in the opinion of a third it is soft and delicate, but to the fourth it appears to be extremely rough and hard. In the end an arbiter, who possesses sight, tells them: 'All your statements as such were correct, but they were wrong in their limitation' (*Maktûb* 4 f.). Similarly, 'on one occasion a mystic will give consideration to the being (*wujûd*) of the material world, on another occasion to the being of the spiritual world, and then again to the being of the World of Omnipotence. Every time he makes use of a phraseology that fits with the relative reality; and it is not necessary that by all these phraseologies the same things are said [...] So the statements of the mystic may differ while in essence there is no contradiction' (*Tafh.* I, 19).

Surveying Shâh Walî Allâh's metaphysical notions as a whole, it appears that actually a sort of eclectic method has been adopted. Everybody may find something to his taste. Traditionally orientated people can accede to what is said on the subject in the reference book *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha*. Sûfîs and adherents of *falasîfa* who had a spiritual affinity with Neo-Platonic thought will be easily satisfied with the numerous emanative terms used. Ash'arites may discover a great resemblance between Shâh Walî Allâh's concept of an *irâda mutajaddida* (divine Will adapting itself to the changing conditions of time) and their atomistic philosophy, while Mu'tazilites will be happy with the statement that Allâh's creational actions are determined by what is most salutary for men. Hindus in Shâh Walî Allâh's environment could even assume that the man of Delhi gained inspiration from their cosmologies when he speaks of an unending sequence of arising and perishing worlds.

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{4} 'al-Rahmût is the foundation of the actualization of the phenomenal world (*nâsût*). Through the combination of al-Rahmût and *al-nâsût* are generated: the celestial spheres and elements; next, that which forms a plane tangent to the World of Spiritual Entities; that which forms a plane tangent to the bodily world, i.e. the three kingdoms of nature' (*Tafh.* I, 157)

{5} Elsewhere Shâh Walî Allâh explains in this connection why he prefers to use similes of streaming water or spreading light: 'The relationship of the universe to its Maker is not like that of a building to its architect, who constructs something of cement and then takes his hands off it... No, it is to be compared to the relation of the sun to the earth which illumines the earth with its light without ceasing' (*Lamha* 21).

{6} For a more detailed description of this initial stage of evolution see *H.B.* I, 33: 'When the elements (sc. water, fire, earth and air) are still in the embryo stage and mix together in greater or lesser proportions, they become compounds, either of two elements like steam, vapour, smoke, mud, whirling dust, char-coals... , or of three elements like loam, watermoss; or of four elements.

These compounds possess characteristics acquired from the components they are composed of. They are called things existing in the atmosphere. Then a mineral form appears'.

{7} 'The relationship of *al-wujûd al-munbasit* to existing objects is similar to the relationship of writing with ink to written letters' (*Lamha* 7).

{8} It is noteworthy that present-day Western scholars are inclined to agree with the Delhi scholar and also like to minimize the discrepancies between Ibn al-'Arabî's thought and Sirhindî's own interpretation of *wahdat al-shuhûd* (see H. Landolt in *Der Islam*, 50, 19, 1, S. 61), whereas Shâh Walî Allâh's compatriots generally maintain that he is in the wrong and that it is impossible to reconcile the ontological views of both mystics (see B.A. Faruqi, *Hadrat-i Mujaddid kâ nazarî-i tawhîd*, Lahore 1967, passim).

{9} I.e. an *irhâs* (litt. 'pedestal'). In the same manner as Shu'ayb was hailed an *irhâs* of Moses and Zachariah an *irhâs* of Jesus (*Tafh.* II, 72), Sirhindî happened to be an *irhâs* of Shâh Walî Allâh. First, the light of prophethood gleamed faintly over the former, after that lights of the Invisible World effulged over the latter (*Tafh.* II, 68).

Chapter four: Psychology

Psychology, as a rule, attracted hardly any attention from traditional Muslim scholarship. Yet, one exception has to be made. Throughout all ages Muslims endowed with mystical leanings have continually felt a particular need to acquire insight into human nature. Sûfî scholars like the Ikhwân al-safâ' assigned the 'science of the souls' (*ilm al-nafsâniyyât*) a place in their encyclopaedia. This stands to reason, for the development of mystic experience is a process which passes through successive levels of mental and psychic perceptions. Thus the Delhi divines state that through knowledge of one's innate dispositions (*istîdâdât*) the mystic can find the most appropriate path for attaining full development (H. XVIII). 'The more that is known of *latîfas* (spiritual centres of a subtle substance), the better a soul can be refined. And whoever is ablest in discerning their various peculiarities is also the ablest when people ask him for guidance' (A.Q. 14 f.).

Incumbent on gaining some idea of the structure of *latîfas* is a preliminary study of the essence of the *rûh* (human spirit) (A.Q. 22). If properly analyzed this appears to be composed of three constituents:
 1. a fine pneuma (*nasama*) produced from the steam of the four humours (blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile) (B.B. 32)1. 'It streams in the flesh and bones like the fire in charcoal or the perfume in a rose' (A.Q. 24). Or, as is elucidated in another version: 'When food has reached the stomach where it is cooked, it generates *nasama* which as a delicate substance travels to the liver, where it is cooked for a second time. The cooked matter is then portioned out among the four humours. Next, a delicate substance emitted from the blood is drawn to the heart where it is collected in a cavity. From there a portion of it ascends to the brain, and is there divided into ten portions. Five of them are for the 'external' senses, i.e. the faculties of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch... The other five are for the 'internal' senses, i.e. the faculty of the *hiss mushtarik* (the Aristotelian *sensus communis*) that coordinates the percepts of the individual 'external' senses, t.w. the faculty of retentive imagination (*khayâl*) which reproduces the objects of sensory perception, the estimative faculty (*wahm*) which perceives the insensible forms connected with the impression of sensible objects, the faculty of retaining concepts (*ma`ânî*), and the talent of knowing how to combine and dispose freely of the concepts and objects of sensory perception. The portion of the *nasama* which flows down to the liver is distributed over the organs and potencies that pervade the body for stimulating procreation and growth, for providing nutrition and shaping. Then there is a portion which simply remains in the heart in order to enable it to control the potencies of the brain and the liver. For all these distributive activities Shâh Walî Allâh uses the metaphor
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of a city-state. In it the liver functions as the chief administrator who is responsible for the receipts and the expenditure; the brain accomplishes the task of a pundit who advises a king; and the heart is the king himself who rules autocratically and gives orders to the armies of man's disposition, on account of which tendons and muscles are strained (B.B. 33 f.). An interesting parallel of these physical aspects, attributed to the *nasama*, can be recognized in the Ayurveda theory of the five *prâna*'s. These 'organic forces' equally regulate the nourishment, digestion, reproduction and movements of the body. The earthly body of man is the 'riding animal', i.e. the substratum of the *nasama*, and the *nasama* in turn can function as the substratum of the divine *rûh*, which has its domicile in higher worlds. In this way the *nasama* may serve as an intermediate screen between the divine *rûh* and the earthly body to disclose latent dispositions of the human body 'in the manner of a fierce sun which bleaches the robe and darkens the bleacher' (H.B. I, 18 f.).

The *nasama*, as we have seen, seeks to acquire food, drink and sexual pleasures. In this capacity it represents man's lower self, 'being inclined to the earth'. On the other hand, it possesses also a side which is directed in an opposite direction, 'feeling drawn toward the world of the holy' (H.B. I, 19). The latter aspiration can be furthered with the assistance of the *nafs nâtiqa*, the second constituent of the *rûh*;

2. the reasoning soul (*nafs nâtiqa*). While elucidating the hidden meaning of Mohammed's *mî`râj* (midnight journey to the seven heavens), Shâh Walî Allâh states that 'the root idea of his riding on the flying steed Burâq was *nafs nâtiqa* having taken its seat on the *nasama*, i.e. the animal perfection (*kamâl*). So the riding on the Burâq was a symbol for the triumph and dominance of the properties of his *nafs nâtiqa* over his animal nature' (H.B. II, 206). In another work the Delhi scholar declares the *nafs nâtiqa* to be the connecting link between the *`ayn thâbita* (transcendental archetype) - which is a purely holy entity - and the *nasama* - which belongs to the objects of this tainted world (Tafh. I, 43).

In origin, the *nafs nâtiqa* is an ebullition from the *nafs kullîyya*, the Universal Soul which 'acts as the *rûh* of the Macrocosmos' (Atyab al- naghâ, 41 f.). Whenever the breath of life is blown into an embryo, there is the moment in which the *nafs nâtiqa* arises as a bubble on the ocean of the *nafs kullîyya*. This is a cosmic

event, and in that very hour a human individual is structured in accordance with the position of the sun or the planets (A.Q. 27 & 113). Thus the *nafs nâtiqa* represents the kernel of a person's personality: 'That by which Zayd is Zayd and 'Amr 'Amr' (B.B. 16). In addition, it orders men's lives and from it special qualities, like the faculty of pursuing general welfare (*ra'y kullî*) arise (A.Q. 26). Its focus of attention is the *tajallî a`zam* (Most Supreme Theophany) (*Tafh.* I, 141) which resides at the heart of the *nafs kullîyya* (A.Q. 117). Its basic occupation is not conceptual thinking (*ta`aqqul*) as the

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Hellenistic philosophers affirm; nay, it applies itself to *`ilm hudûrî* (immediate knowledge) (*Khizâna* 4). Another peculiarity of the *nafs nâtiqa* is its ability to receive revelations of angels and visions of the *hazîra al-quds* through the intermediary of the celestial spirit, i.e. the third constituent of the *rûh* (A.Q. 34); 3. *rûh samâwî* (celestial spirit). This is 'a bubble on the surface of the *`âlam al-mithâl*' (A.Q. 117). Because of its presence in the *hazîra al-quds*, all individuals - men of letters as well as illiterate people - are naturally drawn towards the *hazîra al-quds*: 'Their happiness is in inclining to and gaining affinity with the *hazîra al-quds*; their misery is in turning away from it and in clinging to the earth' (*Tafh.* I, 248). 'In fact, the whole basis of retribution in the next world lies in whatever degree this part of the *rûh* feels attracted to the *hazîra al-quds*' (A.Q. 31).

Turning back to the question raised in the beginning of this chapter concerning the make-up of *latîfas*, Shâh Walî Allâh expounds: 'It is in the combinations between the *nasama* and the two subtle constituents (namely the reasoning soul and the celestial spirit) that the five *latîfas*, perceptible to man's intellect, are generated. These are the concupiscent soul, heart, intellect, spirit that is turned to transcendence and purity, and 'inmost being' (*sirr*), i.e. the highest level of the intellect. The first three mentioned have their stand fixed in the *nasama*, but from the *nafs nâtiqa* and the *rûh samâwî* they receive refreshing outpourings... just as the body receives refreshment from the liver by means of mesaraic veins' (A.Q. 34 f.). The concupiscent soul has most affinity to the *nasama*, the heart to the *nafs nâtiqa*, and the intellect to the *rûh samâwî*. Characteristic of these three *latîfas* is their having the ability to acquire refinement by the practice of *exercitia spiritualia*. Through such refinement their capacities become sublimated, and their dependence on the *tabî'a*, the biological side of man, decreases (*Hama`ât* 107). The two remaining perceptible *latîfas*, the *sirr* which lies above the intellect and the *rûh* which lies above the heart, are so to say sublimed configurations of the intellect and the heart. While the intellect can obtain certainty about the generally accepted articles of faith, the *sirr* is able to embrace higher truth of the pure Transcendental. While *wajd*, a kind of ecstasy, can be attained by the heart, the *latîfa* of the *rûh* may enable man to achieve direct spiritual contact with the Prophet after the example of Uways al-Qaranî (*H.B.* II, 90).

Beyond the five perceptible *latîfas* there exist five (in the *`âlam al-mithâl*) concealed *latîfas*, named *khafî* (arcane one), *nûr al-quds* (sacred light), *hajar al-baht* (gem of stupefaction), *akhfâ* (most hidden), and *anâniyya kubrâ* (full-fledged selfconsciousness). Whatever proceeds from these concealed *latîfas* cannot be perceived by the intellect or *wijdân* (a natural a-priori reason). For this purpose there is another extremely delicate and sensitive organ, which in the idiom of the *sûfis* is called *dhawq* (intuitive anticipation) (A.Q. 132). 'If an advanced mystic comes under the control of the concealed *latîfa*, called *nûr al-quds*, he

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is given over to the *tajallî a`zam*, the source of all divine epiphanies; and he will walk in the way of the heirs of prophecy..., the saints and theosophists. In case he is dominated by the concealed *latîfa* with the name *al-khafî*, his mind will be focused on the *nafs kullîyya*. This will lead him on the path of the major *walî*-hood (*wilâyat-i kubrâ*). And if the concealed *latîfa*, termed *akhfâ*, becomes the prevailing element, the mystic will receive information from the *tajallî a`zam* as well as from the *nafs kullîyya*. This privilege is preserved for a *muhaddath* (somebody who is inspired with true visions). Yet, with an even more exalted state the mystic is favoured, if the concealed *latîfa*, called *anâ*, holds its sway. Then he sees the whole universe in himself (A.Q. 79 - 83).

In *al-Qawl al-jamîl*, an early writing on mysticism, Shâh Walî Allâh sets forth that God created in man six *latîfas* as single entities designating modes and aspects of the *nafs nâtiqa*. This concerns the *qalb*, *rûh*, *sirr*, *khafî*, *akhfâ* and *anâ*. Then we are told that once his father, 'Abd al-Rahîm, in explanation of them, 'drew a circle and said: 'This is the *qalb*'. Thereupon he drew in this circle another one and said: 'This is the *rûh*'. And he carried on with it till he finished a sixth circle, on which he said: 'This is the *anâ* (ego)' (Q.J. 105). Six concentric circles, the outermost for the *latîfa* of the *qalb*, the innermost for the *latîfa* of the true self. This provides a symbolism for the journey of a mystic who, starting from the *qalb* and passing along ever more inward *latîfas*, progresses to his true self, and in consequence realizes self-identification with God. For, 'he who learns to know his inner self by *`ilm hudûrî* (immediate

knowledge not acquired through the canals of ratiocinations), has by this knowledge learnt to know his Lord' (*Khizâna* 9).

'Deeper and deeper' is in religious language an alternative expression for 'higher nad higher'. Hence we also meet a conception of *latîfas* according to which they are credited with finer qualities the higher they are placed in the human body. Then the *latîfa* of the *nafs* is considered to house under the umbilicus, a proper locality for sensuality being the junction of stomach and temperament (*mizâj*). The *qalb* lies two fingers under the left side of the breast and the *rûh* under the right side of it. The *sirr* is situated a little higher in the middle of the chest; the *khafî* is to be found in between the eye-brows, and the *akhfâ* in the dura mater.

Of equally increasing grandiosity and bliss are the mystic states experienced when the seeker of God ascends along these *latîfas*. At the stage of the *qalb* there is merely *dhikr* (the commemoration of God by means of repetition of a certain formula). Reaching the *rûh* a *hudûr* (the presence of the mystic's heart with God) is tasted. At the level of *sirr*, *mukâshafa* (unveiling) is granted, on account of which the *sûfî* sees the realities of the *`âlam al-mithâl* with his physical eyes. At the height of the *latîfa* called *khafî*, one enjoys *mushâhada* (contemplative witnessing) and recognizes that his *dhât* (essence) is related to God's *dhât*. Arrived at the zenith of the *akhfâ*, one 51.

will receive information from the *tajallî a`zam*, the source of all divine manifestations (*Khizâna* 9).

Once or twice Shâh Walî Allâh's mystical teachings give forth a curious smell of Indianism. And it is not in the least surprising if we discover an instance of it when he is still under the charge of his rather liberal father. So the six concentric circles he drew in front of his son offer an unmistakable parallel to the so-called *cakras* (wheels, circles) we are informed of in Hindu Tantrism and Yoga practices. They are located in the same, or approximately the same places in the human bodies as the six *latîfas* discussed above. The *manipûra-cakra* lies at the level of the umbilicus; the *anâhata-cakra* is found in the region of the heart and the *vishudda-cakra* in the region of the throat; the *âjnâ-cakra* is situated between the eye-brows; at the top of the cranium the *saharâra-cakra* is located (M. Eliade, *Le Yoga*, Paris 1960, 244 f.).

Left to the end, we now shall try to expound the most evolved and perhaps at the same time most personal notions the Delhi savant has developed in the domain of psychology. To begin with, he classes what are considered the three basic components of every human individual (i.e. the *nafs shahwiyya*, *qalb*, and *`aql*) in the category of the perceptible *latîfas*. The *nafs shahwiyya* (concupiscent soul) has its residence in the liver. This potency is required for the preservation of the body and to its activities belong eating, drinking, sleep and cohabitation. It is the aperture through which Satan whispers suggestions, tempting to evil, impurity and fierceness. The *qalb* is a psychic center, which has its support in a fir-cone shaped lump of flesh lying two fingers under the left side of the breast. It is the origin of the emotions and it has the capacity of making decisions. Angels use it as the aperture for their inspirations. The *`aql* resides in the brain. It covers the area lying between the concrete and the abstract. If, for instance, it observes individual human beings, it is able to mould the concept of a universal human form. Recollecting things of the past and planning for things of the future are part of its functions (*Tafh.* I, 171). One of its distinguishing marks is 'sure knowledge in respect of m, atters closely related to traditional doctrines like faith in the unseen and belief in the omnipotence of God' (*H.B.* II, 90). By means of the mesaraic veins these three *latîfas* are provided with a system of intercommunication. By virtue of this possibility of interaction, each of them may share in the special properties of the other, or may make its influence felt on the others: 'If both the heart and the intellect are governed by the *nafs*, then a great many evils will result... But if the heart and the *nafs* obey the intellect, then praiseworthy qualities will arise' (*A.Q.* 42 f. and 77). Quite often such interpretation is indispensable in giving full scope to man's potentialities: 'If there were no cognition of the displeasing or pleasing effect of vilifying or winning words, no anger or love would be roused; if there were no receptivity of the heart, no religious belief would develop' (*H.B.* II, 88). Further, through a process of refinement, these three

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latîfas can regain their original constitution. The changes worked in this way are described by our author as follows: 'Still in the grip of the turbulent instinctive disposition of human nature, the intellect has to sanction the things which come to it in a fashion adopted to human nature. After its refinement, however, it obtains such a certain belief in what is presented by the Law that it is as if it were a matter of empirical observation... Still rooted in human nature the heart has to love benefactors and patrons, to hate odious enemies, to fear what is harmful and to hope for what is useful. After its refinement, however, it loves God, it fears His punishment and hopes for His reward. Still in the grip of turbulent human nature, the *nafs* revels in lusts and seeking ease. After its refinement, however, repentance, self-abnegation and religious strictness are its characteristics' (*H.B.* II, 91)2.

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Another characteristic feature of these three perceptible *latîfas* are the respective *maqâmât* and *ahwâl* they engender. As a rule, Western scholars of Islam, are accustomed to discuss *maqâmât* and *ahwâl* in the context of the Sûfî Path; *maqâmât* representing the stages of progressive spiritual development and *ahwâl* being the 'states' which come over a mystic during his journey. In the expositions of Shâh Walî Allâh, however, these two collective terms figure primarily as psychic and ethical notions, though at times provided with a mystic flavour. They are said to be fruits of *iḥsân* (sincere worship of God) (H.B. II, 88). When qualities of an angelic nature have become acquired traits (*malakât*), of which the actions follow a recurrent pattern, they are to be termed *maqâmât* (moral habits). And if these actions appear like bolts of lightening, as is the case with visions, voices from heaven, they are called *ahwâl* (states which descend unexpectedly) (H.B. II, 91).

A fundamental element of the *maqâmât* and *ahwâl* pertaining to the *`aql* is sure knowledge (*yaqîn*) in respect of matters concerning the Muslim creed as, for instance, the articles of Predestination and Resurrection. The *maqâmât* resulting from *yaqîn* include:

- a) *shukr* (gratitude): coming to realize all the material and spiritual benefits one owes to one's Creator;
- b) *tawakkul* (trust in God): which implies not worrying about making a living;
- c) *hayba* (to stand in awe of God): comes from the contemplation of God's revenge and terror;
- d) *husn al-zann* (to think well of God): proceeds from the acknowledgment of God's benefits and favours;
- e) *tafrîd* (isolation from the world in order to focus all attention on God): is enfolding oneself in the *dhikr* (remembrance of God) to such extent that it is as if one sees God with one's own eyes. Then gloomy imaginings of one's soul disappear;
- f) *ikhlâs* (to make God the exclusive object of faith);
- g) *tawhîd* (the experience of the Oneness of God);
- h) the position of a *siddîq* (zealous persevering believer who is 'as kindred to a prophet as sulphur is to fire') or *muhaddath* (man who is inspired) (H.B. II, 92 f.).

To the *ahwâl* connected with the *`aql* belong:

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- a) the *tajallî* ('radiance') of God's Essence, God's Attributes, and mandates of God's Essence. That refers to the Hereafter and its occurrences. Hence, on certain occasions one may obtain a mental representation of Paradise and Hell;
- b) reliable clairvoyance (*firâsa*) and inner speech (*khâtîr*) which appear to correspond with reality;
- c) wholesome vision;
- d) sweet experience of confidential talk with God;
- e) *muhâsaba* (analysis of the soul);
- f) consciousness of one's own insignificance opposite God's majesty (H.B. II, 94 f.).

Maqâmât pertaining to the *qalb* are:

- a) concentration on one's thought on the Hereafter and consideration of things of this worldly life as despicable;
- b) exclusive love of God;
- c) God's calling a worshipper's attention to infringement of good manners by blame, and by assent once he again turns to the righteous path;
- d) becoming a *shahîd* (martyr) or a *hawârî* (apostle) (H.B. II, 95 - 8);

Ahwâl specific of the *qalb* are:

- a) *sukr* (intoxication), i.e. that in the *`aql* and then in the *qalb* the light of faith begins to shine so strongly that the affairs of this world lose all significance;
- b) *ghalaba* ('overcoming'). There are two types of *ghalaba*: the *ghalaba dâ`iyya* (being overcome by an inner urge). An instance of this is `Umar's opposition to the treaty of Hudaibiyya (in March 628) because of undue zeal; and the *ghalaba dâ`iyya ilâhiyya* (being overcome by a divine urge). A case of this is the divine urge which Abû Bakr received in his heart to restrain the Prophet from continuous prayer, as is recorded in the battle of Badr (March 624). Then he seized Mohammed by the arm and said: 'Stop' (sc. your constant entreaty will annoy your Lord, for surely God will fulfil His promise to you);
- c) the preference of obedience to God above obedience to anything else;
- d) the *ghalaba al-khawf* (being overcome by the fear of God) (H.B. II, 98 f.);

Among the *maqâmât* of the *nafs* that becomes overpowered by the light of faith Shâh Walî Allâh reckons:

- a) *tawba* (repentance). Its two major effects are *hayâ'* (shame): the squirming of the *nafs* at the appearance of God's majesty and *wara'* (abstinence from anything doubtful): turns the *nafs* away from confusion;
- b) *zuhd* (renunciation); the awareness of the disgracefulness of being occupied with what exceeds man's daily wants. God has given *zuhd* as a means for perfection of the *nafs*, but He has not introduced it as a

statutory obligation (*H.B.* II,99 ff.).

Ahwâl distinctive of the *nafs* are:

- a) *ghayba* (absence from all except God). This means that for the *nafs* all carnal appetites disappear;
- b) *mahq* (annihilation). This indicates that on account of an

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inclination of the *nafs* toward the *`aql* that is filled with the light of God, one can go without food and drink for an unusually long period (*H.B.* II,102).

The two remaining perceptible *latîfas* after the three just mentioned, are the *sirr* which lies above the *`aql*, and the *rûh* which lies above the *qalb*. Their higher position enables them to watch their lower placed partners closely. Both of them are sublimed configurations of *`aql* and *qalb*. If the two reach their original residence and ascend to their zenith, they witness the *tajallî a`zam*. The most sublime state reserved for the *rûh* is indicated as *hubût* ('descent'). It is comparable to the state of a nightingale, which when in the presence of a rose, is overcome with emotion. Visions are a product specific of the *sirr*; the state characteristic of this *latîfa* is 'intimacy' (*uns*) (*A.Q.* 36,75 & 104). A trait peculiar to it is that of discerning one single design (*tadbîr*) in the cosmos (*Tafh.* I,20).

For the traveler on the path (*sâlik*) leading to the divine Essence, the *latîfas* serve as a kind of landmarks on the upward path. At every *latîfa* which he reaches, he experiences the influence of the determinants peculiar to it. If, for instance, the *latîfas* of *rûh* and *sirr* gain mastery over him, he enjoys spiritual delights, obtained from intimacy of the *rûh* and the knowledge of the *sirr*, on account of which he turns away from all material pleasures (*Tafh.* I,231). For the ascent from the one *latîfa* to the other he ought to use the common methods of spiritual training. So frequent meditation exercises are a means for passing from the *`aql* to the *sirr* (*Tafh.* I,136).

As to the way upwards, three levels are to be distinguished: the *wujûd zulmânî* (man's gloomy existence in this world), the *wujûd rûhânî* (spiritual existence) and the *wujûd ilâhî* (divine existence). If one succeeds in passing the five perceptible *latîfas*, the stage of *wujûd rûhânî* is attained and he becomes the Perfect Man (*al-insân al-kâmil*). For a further continuation of the journey, however, the *sâlik* has to resort to the concealed *latîfas*. Only through them the *wujûd ilâhî* can be reached. This is an undertaking which is to be reserved for an elite, and it is surely too dangerous for a common man. The latter should confine himself to the cultivation of perceptible *latîfas* (*Tafh.* I,181; *A. Q.* 135 f.).

In elucidation of capacities inherent to the concealed *latîfas*, the Delhi divine sets forth: peculiar to the *khaffî* is the discovery that one and the same reality streams in all existing things. A characteristic quality of the *latîfa* termed *nûr al-quds* is its ability to become acquainted with the disputes of the *mala a`lâ* and the decisions descending from them. A specific property of the *hajar al-baht* is its inexplicable evanescence into the *tajallî a`zam* in consequence of which man becomes one of the instruments of God (*Tafh.* I,181 f.). If the *akhfâ* becomes the prevailing element in a mystic, he will receive information from the *tajallî a`zam* as well as from the *nafs kullîyya*. Yet he is favoured with an even more exalted state if the concealed *latîfa*, called *anâniyya kubrâ* (full-fledged self-consciousness), holds its sway. Then he sees the 55.

whole universe in himself. No longer do divine knowledge and revelations filter down from above, but now he finds them in his inner self (*A.Q.* 124 ff.). This is the level of the major *walî*-hood (*al-wilâyat al-kubrâ*) (*A.Q.* 37). When he has reached this stage of *al-tawhîd al-dhâtî* (Oneness in the Essence), he possesses all divine Attributes except self-existence and eternity. In fact, he remains an *`abd* (servant) as before. Nevertheless, he is freed from the erroneous impression that *`abd* and *rabb* (Lord) are two different realities (*Tafh.* I,169 f.).

Another interesting quality which Shâh Walî Allâh ascribes to the *latîfas* is the aptitude to function as reflectors of the several categories of God's Attributes. The more delicate a *latîfa* is structured, the more sublime is the nature of the divine Attributes reflected on it. Upon the *qalb* falls the reflection of the *idâfiyyât*, the Attributes lowest in rank. They comprehend secondary actions flowing out from God's Essence. The *thubûtiyyât*, the Attributes properly speaking as life, hearing, sight are mirrored upon the *rûh*. The *shu'ûnât* ('potential' Attributes) which are, according to the Delhi scholar the germ forms of the *idâfiyyât* and the *thubûtiyyât* (*Khizâna* 5), project their lustre upon the *sirr*. It is the *khaffî* which receives the reflection of the *salbiyyât*, the 'privative' Attributes which accentuate divine transcendency. And finally upon the *akhfâ* the 'mother' of all Attributes, t.w. the Attribute of divine self-objectivation, is reflected (*Tafh.* II,41).

Besides the recorded varied figuring of the *latîfas* in the mystic's quest of his very identity, a final aspect worthy of mention is the function they perform in Shâh Walî Allâh's classifications of history.

In the so-called historic religions the hour of birth, the era of the founder's appearance, is taken for the most crucial event in the history of mankind. This is the *pleroma tou chronou*, the fulness of times. A somewhat

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illogical issue of this belief is that by the adherents of these religions, the prenatal period in general is evaluated much more highly than the postnatal ages. The Christians, for example, will without hesitation acknowledge a Moses or Isaiah as conveyers and exponents of authentic divine revelation. But the office with which they credit an Augustine or a Luther is that of 'father of the church' at the most, and in the process of revelation as such the latter will never enter. In orthodox Islam the same is true: The advent of Mohammed is viewed as the terminative point in an extended revelatory period, in which former prophets also officiated as agencies of God. The events after the blessed times of the Messenger of God are, however, of a considerably lesser religious significance. This is implicative of the well-known doctrine of Mohammed's being the seal of prophets. Shâh Walî Allâh's exposition of the five *taghayyurât*, deteriorations, is in complete agreement with traditional views, as can be pointed out in the history subsequent to the death of the Prophet. The first *taghayyur* is the transfer of power to Abû Bakr; the second the death of `Umar who was the bolt

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on the door of *fitna* (civil war); the third, the murder of `Uthmân, was the worst, since it turned out to be the dividing line between the age of order that preceded it and the chaos and anarchy that followed; the fourth is the establishment of the `Abbâsid caliphate in Irâq; and the fifth the end of the Arab dominion and the arrival of the sway of non-Arabs, whose rule is like that of the Zoroastrians but with the difference that the former still observe the *salât* and confess the *shahâda* with their tongues (*Izâla* I, 157): 'I myself being born in the final stages of this fifth deterioration do not know what, after this, God has in mind for the future' (*Izâla* I, 148 f.). This theory of the five *taghayyurât* is set out in a work in which the Sunnî standpoint is expounded over against the Shî`î principles.

However, in another book of his which contains various teachings of an esoteric nature, the Delhi savant discloses that in his personal judgment the mission of Mohammed does not represent a final event of sacred history, but merely a phase to be followed by periods of further developments of God's designs. The days in which he himself lives he experiences as the most advanced evolution of divine Revelation. The argumentation for the existence of progressive phases in God's revelations to humanity is based on a demonstration of a coming into operation of perceptible and concealed *latîfas* in a sequence of increasing subtleness and quality. 'The human form', so Shâh Walî Allâh holds, 'is founded on the completion of the *latîfas* of *qalb*, *aqf* and *nafs*. Accordingly, the human race with Adam as the first man came into existence... In the following epoch the *qalb* and the *aqf* of man were charged with getting to know the truth of God... For the provision of livelihood (being an activity of the *nafs*) people were allowed to ride animals... ,to eat their meat, to drink their milk and to use their wool for clothing... Our prophet Mohammed marked the end of this epoch and, at the same time, he became the inaugurator of a new period⁴ which was an expansion of the foregoing one. In that new era the gracious eyes of God turned to the *rûh* and *sirr*. Hence in that time the beloved, the perfect and the favoured was that man, in whom both of these *latîfas* were alert... Next, at the time of Ibn al-`Arabî the gracious eyes of God turned to the *latîfa*, named *khaffî*... The spiritual leaders of that age were inspired knowledge of *tawhîd* (unification with God) and the world's vanishing into one Reality (the theory of *wahdat al-wujûd*)... Finally, in our days the gracious eyes of God turned to the *latîfas*, called *hajar al-baht* and *anâniyya kubrâ*' (*Tafh.* I, 123 f.). Consequently many prerogatives, like a full command of all facets of mysticism as well as an all-encompassing knowledge of the *sharî'a* and of all that pertains to prophecy, had been bestowed on Shâh Walî Allâh, himself being a chosen one of this last epoch, since both of these *latîfas* operated on him. Of this period it was said that 'up to the West rays of light were shining, and the earth was irradiated by the light of its Lord' (*Qur'ân* XXXIX, 69) (*Tafh.* I, 199). Thus the Delhi scholar ejaculated enraptured: 'My Lord conveyed to me that after me there would be found no one having attained nearness to God but I would have had a hand in his moral education and spiritual training, until the

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moment that Jesus comes down from heaven' (*Tafh.* I, 120).

{1} Or, according to an earlier exposition: 'from the delicate stream that arises from a cookingpot in which the various elements are found' (A.Q. 24). It should be borne in mind that in Islamic medicine humours are called 'daughters of the elements'. A third version given of its arising: 'engendered in the heart from blood that has been refined' (*Tafh.* I, 247) agrees with the account of al-Ghazâlî who states that it is a subtle substance coming forth from a ventricle of the physical heart (*Ihyâ' ulûm al-dîn*, Cairo n.d. III, 2). The specific contribution of the Delhi scholar to this topic consists of the choice of the term *nasama* and the elaborate application of it.

{2} In A.Q. 83 f. the effect of the refinement of the *nafs* is said to be *samâha* (generosity), while the effects

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mentioned as resulting from the refinement of the heart are *sidq* (sincerity), *adab* (good breeding) and *wajd* (ecstatic experience). Fruits of the refinement of the intellect are a conviction concerning the *tajallî a`zam*, inward revelation (*kashf*), perspicacity (*firâsa*) into what is about to happen, and a correct interpretation of the Qur'ân and traditions.

{3} However, absence of any concern about earning one's livelihood is in contravention of the *shar`* (revealed law) (Q.J. 27).

{4} In our age another Muslim Indian thinker Sir Muhammad Iqbal has reiterated and reformulated the same idea, arguing: '... the Prophet of Islam seems to stand between the ancient and modern world.. In him life discovers other sources of knowledge... The birth of Islam... is the birth of inductive intellect' (*The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, Lahore 1954, 126).

Chapter five: Mysticism

General evaluation. Although almost every page of his writings carries a mystic flavour, the Delhi divine nevertheless emphasizes strongly that *sûfism* as such is not soul-saving, and that conformity with the Holy Scriptures is a *conditio sine qua non* for its validity: 'Not one of us is someone who fights shy of the profession of scholars... *Sûfis* blinded by passion, who do not ponder on Qur'ân and *hadîth*, are brigands and robbers of the *dîn* (archetypal religion)' (*Tafh.* II, 202) 'In the wake of the Christians 'he superadds elsewhere,' nowadays descendants of the great saints make fantastic claims with regard to their ancestors, assigning to them a nearly divine status' (*F.K.* 35). 'The sons of *pîrs* cherish all kinds of personal opinions and abandon the Path God revealed to Mohammed for the benefit of mankind. How stupid are the folks, who posing as *sûfis*, wear women's dress, contemplate the divine beauty, preferably reflected on handsome boys, drink wine and *bang* (intoxicating drink prepared of hemp-leaves), listen to spiritual music and participate in the ecstatic experiences of dervishes' (*Tafh.* I, 112 ff.). 'I say to those who mortify the bodily appetites,... quote apocryphal traditions and diverting tales in their sermons,... and offer medical prescriptions supplied with diabolic suggestions,... that you might do better to impart *iẖsân* (sincere worship of God)' (*Tafh.* I, 215).

History of mysticism After close examination of his writings it turns out that Shâh Walî Allâh discovered seven distinct periods in the development of Muslim mystic practice and thought, t.w.

1) 'During the initial period of Mohammed's blessed community (*umma*) (i.e. the era of the Companions and Successors) the faculty of the limbs and organs was dominant; that is to say the heart faculty was totally engrossed in the activation of the energies of limbs and organs. What was discussed by the people of this community pertained to issues concerning the outward form of the Law' (A.Q. 111). 'To their mind *iẖsân* meant the performance of *salât*, fasting, *dhikr*, Qur'ân-reading, *hajj*, *sadaqa* and *jihâd*. None of them was accustomed to hang the head upon the bosom in a contemplative mood... *Kashf*, i.e. 'revelation' that is observed while awake by the faculty of imagination (*khayâl*), miracles, intoxication and raptures were seldom found in them; and if they were seen, it was by chance, not on purpose' (*H.* II);

2) 'After the era of the Companions and Successors, there appeared certain people who opted for over-meticulousness and extreme rigidity... The utmost effort should be made to tame the fury of both the carnal and the aggressive self. Therefore they renounced sexual intercourse, delicious food and fine clothing... This is the mysticism of the ordinary men: not knowing where to draw the line when performing their *exercitia spiritualia*

1... The *sûfî*, who first took this line of action and laid down the rules for it, was Hârith b. Asad al-Muhâsibî (d. 857)' (A.Q. 70

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f.). In that epoch 'connection with *sûfî* masters was established by collective *dhikr* along with listening to poetry, teaching and keeping to the rules required for the refinement of the soul, not as yet by the institutes of the *khirqâ* (the assumption of a patched frock) and *bay`a* (taking the vow of allegiance to one's *pîr*) (*Intibâh* I, 2 f.).

3) 'In the time of the *sûfî* leader al-Junayd Abu 'l-Qâsim al-Baghdâdî (d. 910), or shortly before it, mysticism began to reveal different aspects. Now people's principal goal was to be attached to God with heart and soul... Accordingly, they experienced states of theophany and of being veiled, of intimacy (*uns*) and estrangement (*wahshat*)... In this period *tawajjuh* - a term which indicates that a soul concentrates on the Ultimate Reality to such extent that it is coloured by the colour of God - had not reached its final point. People were certainly overwhelmed by the lights of obedience and worship of God, but still the spiritual state of *tawajjuh* appeared only occasionally like flashes of lightning' (*H.* II). 'al-Junayd, the 'Lord of the Sect' was the first person to loose himself from the extremely rigid practices and who, by adopting a middle course, was able to place every spiritual exercise where it rightly belonged... In short, the refinement of the five perceptible *latîfas* is fundamental for traversing the *sûfî* Path by the method of Junayd' (A.Q. 72 f.). In this era the customs of the *khirqâ* and *bay`a* were introduced (*Intibâh* I, 3). Consequently, 'this epoch became the epoch of the *tarîqa* (religious brotherhood)' (*Tafh.* I, 77). 4) In the generation of Shaykh Abû Sa`îd b. Abî'l-Khayr (d. 1049) and Shaykh Abu'l-Hasan Kharâqânî (d. 1033) another new form was given to mysticism. Through *jadẖb* (trance) the spiritual state (*nisba*) of *tawajjuh* was attained in full, on account of which people discovered that there is only one Essence, upon which all things depend. They were absorbed in that Essence and they were coloured by It. They no longer needed to be occupied with *awrâd* (supererogatory liturgies), *wazâ`if* (daily offices) and strenuous *exercitia spiritualia*. So they renounced the world completely (*H.* II).

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5) In the age of al-Shaykh al-akbar Ibn al-`Arabî (d. 1240), or shortly before it, the intellectual power of mystics expanded and, passing beyond the stage of psychic emotions, they engaged heart and soul in search of the highest realities in order to find out the stages of self-unfolding (*tanazzulât*) of the Self-existent, the circumstances at the beginning of this process, and so on (*H.* II).

6) Thereafter a perverse sect appeared in Islam. These people as, for instance, Sadr al-Dîn al-Qûnawî (d. 1263) and `Abd al-Rahmân Jâmî (d. 1492), thought that God would be identical with the world and the world would be identical with God, and that no Account or Punishment will occur. According to us, man realizes by nature that God is Unique, approving and disapproving, forgiving and punishing (*Tafh.* I, 206).

7) Hinting at himself in veiled terms, the Delhi divine discloses: 'After many ages once again another terminator and inaugurator of a mystic period was born. He analysed and classified the various stages of man's development to perfection, putting all of them in

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their proper places... He also sifted out the types of knowledge which have been divulged by the divine will for the good of the whole world and of which the seal of prophets is the source ..., and he hopes, God willing, that by his hand new life will spring up' (*Tafh.* I, 77 f.).

The mystic venture In the *Hama`ât*, a type of handbook for the practice of a sûfî, the behavioural pattern for a *sâlik* (wayfarer on the sûfî Path) is expounded as follows: He should perform 50 *rak`as* (bendings) in a 24-hour period, i.e. 17 for the obligatory *salâts*, 12 for the *rawâtib* (*salâts* which are recommended and are part of the so-called *sunna râtibâ*, 'established norm'), 11 for the *salâts* repeated during the night, 2 for the *salât* pertaining to the sunrise, 4 for the forenoon-*salât*, and 4 for the *salât* at the sun's decline. The fasts he ought to observe are those on the 'Day of `Arafa', the `Ashûrâ', the three days of every month mentioned in the traditions (= the 13th, 14th and 15th of every lunar month), the three 'white', i.e. moonlit, days and the first six days of the month Shawwâl. As for the *sadaqa* (voluntary offering), he should feed a poor man every day from his own resources, and, besides the *sadaqa* at the end of Ramadân, he should clothe a poor person once a year. As regards his comportment in daily life, he should not distinguish himself from his own companions and family. If he belongs to the class of `ulamâ', he should behave as one of them; if he belongs to the guild of artisans, he should act as one of them, and if he belongs to the military people, he should follow their conduct (*H.* V). This last rule is usually termed *khalwat dar anjuman* (solitude in society), a principle dear to the Naqshbandî order. In elucidation of it Shâh Walî Allâh observes: Distinguishing oneself by the dress of a dervish gives other people the impression of hypocrisy and show (*Q.J.* 92).

The spiritual itinerary (*sulûk*) itself can be properly compared with the combustion process of ice: melting all the while it becomes water and then becomes water-vapour (*Sat.* 34). 'Mystics', so the Delhi savant explains, 'are transformed from state to state. It happens like this: Below the ice a fire is kindled so that it melts and becomes water. After that, the heating continues till the coolness of the water disappears, becomes tepid, hot and gets the effects of fire, i.e. of cooking, giving pain and causes blisters in the body of man. Yet, in spite of all these changes the water remains water, though through them the similarity between water and fire increases. In the same way the 'effacement' (*fanâ*) and 'subsistence' (*baqâ*) of the mystics is not a discarding of the human form, but rather a withdrawing from qualities of an animal nature and an approaching nearer to human qualities of an angelic nature. After that, they rise to the rank of the *jabarût* (World of Omnipotence)' (*Sat.* 40). Thus they reach the spot in the *hazîra al-quds* ('Holy Enclosure') which is reserved for them. Finally, they rise to the realm of the *lâhût* (World of the divine Essence) (*Sat.* 34).

Or to put it more elaborately: The essence of the mystic

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journey, as we are told elsewhere, 'is that the rule of one *latîfa* gains mastery over another one. Then two *fanâs* are thinkable:

1) the *fanâ* of the *wujûd zulmânî* (man's gloomy existence in this world) by which the rule of the *latîfas* of *qalb* and *aql* gains mastery over the *nafs shahwiyya* (concupiscent soul), the *nafs sabu`iyya* (ferocious soul) and the *nafs ammâra* (evil-prompting soul), which are attached to customs and usages. Accordingly, the mystic traveller is no longer governed by carnal lusts and habits... Next, the *latîfas* of *rûh* and *sirr* gain mastery over him, on account of which he is overpowered by spiritual delight, obtained from intimacy of the *rûh* and knowledge of the *sirr*. Consequently, he turns away from all material delights...

2) the *fanâ* of the *wujûd rûhânî* (spiritual existence) by which either the rule of the *anâniyya kubrâ* (full-fledged self-consciousness), which is dispersed over all existing things, gains mastery over the mystic wayfarer, and his own *anâniyya sughrâ* (minor ego) fades away; or the rule of the *hajar al-baht* (gem of stupefaction valued for its magic properties), which by diving into the *tajallî a`zam* returns to the origin from

whence it gushed forth,gains mastery over him' (*Tafh.* I,230 f.).

If,however,we want to discuss the mystic venture in detail,the following stages the wayfarer has to pass can be noted:

1) the preparatory period of *tahâra* (purification). 'The method to be followed for this is that the *sâlik* chooses a place of seclusion,eats and drinks in moderation,performs the *ghusl* (major ritual ablution) repeatedly... and fixes his mind to the light which is spread in the atmospheric mass. In a few days the light of *tahâra* will shine... A distinguishing characteristic of its appearance is the enjoyment of ease,peace of mind and a friendly environment (*Tafh.* I,221 f.);

2) the performance of *dhikr*. 'In the opinion of the majority of mystics the two most preferable patterns of *dhikr* are the *dhikr* of 'negation and affirmation' (stating: 'no divinity save Allâh')² and the *dhikr* of the 'Name of God' (whereby the word Allâh is ejaculated continuously)... In order to bring his spirit into a state of utmost tension,the wayfarer should dwell on thoughts of death ,reading edifying stories,and listen to admonitory words or pleasant melodies. Next,he should perform two *rak`as*...,and should say: 'No divinity save Allâh' with the tongue; and it should be done in the way that at the start 'no' is said from below (i.e. the navel) and 'divinity' in the brain (as if it came from the pia mater,the delicate inner vascular membrane that invests the brain),thereupon driving 'save Allâh' forcefully into the heart... The negation not only contemplates affection but God,but also any existence but God... It is indubitable that if someone of a wholesome and affectionate nature performs *dhikr* in the directed manner for one or two hours,he will acquire complete tranquillity of mind, will be troubled no more by disturbing thoughts,and will be filled with a true yearning (*shawq*)' (*H.* VI). In respect of the highly debated question whether the Central Asian shaykhs of the Naqshbandî brotherhood (the so-called Khwâjagân) only practised *dhikr* in a low voice or also accepted the vocal method,Shâh Walî

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Allâh declares: 'Some followers of the Naqshbandî order assert that the Khwâjagân forbade the vocal *dhikr*. The real facts of this case are that the Naqshbandî leaders practised the vocal as well as the *dhikr* in a low voice,the vocal *dhikr* even more frequently. When,however,they perceived that by the Hanafî school the vocal *dhikr* was regarded 'reprehensible',they gave preference to the *dhikr* in a low voice' (*H.* VI);

3) the *murâqaba* (spiritual communion with the divine Attributes). 'After having attained the state of a true yearning (*dhawq*) and having experienced its effect on his heart,the wayfarer should reduce social intercourse,keep aloof from worldly affairs and give up pleasures and the like,so that this state becomes full reality for him and devoid of any phantasy. Then he enters upon the stage of *murâqaba*. In the general opinion the essence of *murâqaba* is that the wayfarer's mind is completely concentrated on the divine Attributes³ ... so that eventually he himself and everything else,from right and left,from above and below,on the inside and on the outside is encompassed by the Almighty,... and he sees the *splendour* of God's light shining from all sides' (*H.* VII).

After that,two courses are available to the wayfarer:

4) the course of *sulûk* and the course of *jadhb* (trance).*Sulûk* refers to the cultivation of ethical qualities like humility,purity and passionate love of God (*`ishq*).In contrast to the course of *jadhb*,it is corroborated by the *sharî`a* (*H.* IX). The route of *jadhb*⁴, the other choice the mystic traveller can make,refers to 'the tearing of the veils of the specifications of being in order to reach the Ultimate Reality. It penetrates to the very Beginning in a retrograde motion by the way of one's ego. Then the *nafs kulliyya*,the Universal Soul and the divine Names are reached; and finally it leads to the Essence of God. The course of the *jadhb* consists of three parts:

a) the *tawhîd af`âlî* (Oneness in Action). It is the discovery that the universe in all its movements and in all its actions - as though it were a marionette - depends on the direction and activity of One Person (sc. God);

b) the *tawhîd sifâtî* (Oneness in the Qualities) that appears after the *tawhîd af`âlî*. This refers to the recognition that there is an archetype contained in the various forms of the phenomena as,for instance,the idea of a universal man implicit in the multiple human individuals;

c) the *tawhîd dhâtî*(i.e. becoming conscious of one's oneness with God).When the wayfarer contemplates his own ego and dwells further on it,he will through his ego reach the root of being. Subsequently,the state of *tawhîd dhâtî* descends upon him like a thunderbolt (*H.* IX). Of the curious experiences one has with this state the following report is made: 'When the mystic reaches the *hayûlâ* (primary matter) of everything and the origin of all,he himself becomes the origin of all that exists... and receives the power to create... This manner of creating means that he is able to manifest himself in whatever shape he chooses...

Consequently,an advanced gnostic (*`ârif*) is in a position to become earth,water,air or fire,and to assume the shape of... a mute animal,a plant...,an

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angel, heavenly body or a star... Having attained that state he possesses all divine attributes except self-existence and eternity' (*Tafh.* I, 169 f.).

Characterization and evaluation of tarîqas In the summing-up of his expositions of the *ashghâl* (meditation techniques) of various brotherhoods prevalent in 18th century India Shâh Walî Allâh declares in his early writing *al-Qawl al-jamîl*: 'The goal of all *tarîqas* is the bringing about of a predisposition (*hay'a*) in the *nafs nâtiqa* which they name *nisba* ('relationship') since it establishes an affiliation and connection with God... Its most distinguishing feature is its being a condition in the *nafs nâtiqa* that engenders affinity with the angels and a longing for the World of Omnipotence (*âlam al-jabarût*)' (*Q.J.* 108). In the *Hawâmi* the characteristics of the different sûfî leaders are enumerated: 'The fundamental *nisba* of `Abd al-Qâdir al-Jîlânî (d. 1166) was the *nisba* of Uwaysî-hood5 ...; the fundamental *nisba* of Khwâja Bahâ' al-Dîn Naqshband (d. 1389) was the *nisba* of *yâd-dâsh*t (concentration on the reality of God which is stripped of sounds, words, ecstatic emotions and so on)...; the *nisba* of the early masters of the Chishtîs was the *nisba* of *nûr, tahâra* and *sakîna* (tranquility owing to a light descending from God) permeated with elements of the *nisba* of *ishq*, while the *nisba* of the Chishtî masters of the intermediate period was the *nisba* of *ishq* permeated with elements of the *nisba* of *nûr* and *sakîna*,... the *nisba* of the later Chishtî masters became the *nisba* of *ishq* permeated with portions of the *nisba* of *tawhîd* (consciousness of one's oneness with God). The *nisba* of the Suhrawardî order is that of the light of purity and the light of divine presence permeated with elements of the *nisba* of *yâd-dâsh*t' (*H.* XVI).

As for Shâh Walî Allâh's personal taste, at least before 1732 he seems to have an unmistakable preference for the so-called Mujaddidî line of the Naqshbandiyya order. For in a treatise written in that year we read: 'In India the most illustrious and pure and the least heretical *tarîqa* is surely the Naqshbandî-Mujaddidî *silâ*. It has two branches, one starting with Khwâja Ma'sûm (d. 1688), the third son of Ahmad Sirhindî, generally known as Mujaddid-i alf-i thâni ('Renewer of the second millenium'); and the other with Shaykh Adam al-Banûrî (d. 1643). With both branches I have a firm tie' (Introduction of the *Risâla muqaddima saniyya fi'l-intisâr li'l- firqa al-Sunniyya*, Khuda Bakhsh Library, Arab Ms. 3660). But later, in reply to a question of his disciple Khwâja Muhammad Amîn al-Kashmîrî about the preferability of the respective Indian *tarîqas* he makes a more differentiated pronouncement. Then he advances the opinion that the particular excellence of the Naqshbandiyya order6 lies in its performance of *murâqaba*. The best method of obtaining inner light, however, is offered by the followers of `Abd al-Qâdir al-Jîlânî. For a proper application of the preaching of the ancients to conditions of the present, the Chishtîs are the right people. Suhrawardîs are to be preferred for their admirable adherence to the Qur'ân and *sunna* (*Kalimât-i tayyibât* 160). In this connection it might be also

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relevant to point to the ambivalent attitude the Delhi scholar adopts towards the ritual of *samâ`* ('hearing', i.e. listening to spiritual music), so dear to the Chishtî sûfîs. He acknowledges that by listening to elegant verses combined with delicious melodies and well-measured cadences wonderful predispositions arise in man's soul. The sounds of tambour and rebeck produce an effect as inebriating as that of wine. Therefore the majority of people striving after ecstasy are very keen on *samâ`*. Yet the methods which the Lawgiver Mohammed prefers for the removal of man's stolidity consist of listening to sermons, the recital of Qur'ânic verses, and meditation on subtle points in prophetic traditions or edifying stories (*H.* XV).

{1} In view of people who in their zeal in performing most harsh practices 'allow a noble member of their body like the hand and foot to shrivel or render a human potency like sexual lust inoperative by cutting off the penis', Shâh Walî Allâh observes that 'such people do not know what worship is, and they are not aware that altering God's creation is a sin with which the Merciful is not pleased' (*B.B.* 119 f.)

{2} 'This *dhikr* contains many esoteric senses: 1) the removal of plain idolatry; 2) the removal of hidden *shirk*; 3) the lifting of veils from the knowledge of God' (*H.B.* II, 72).

{3} (To this end) 'some masters of the Naqshbandî order advise him to visualize a totally empty space or a vast light' (*Q.J.* 82).

{4} The gate of the *jadhb* has been opened by `Alî. 'For that reason the chains of descent in the brotherhoods go back to him' (*H.* XI).

{5} By this *nisba* information is supplied about God's rule of the Universe and spiritual bonds are formed with the souls of sûfî masters and even with the spirit of the Prophet' (*H.* XI).

{6} Another special merit of this order is that, while later mystics are not inclined to pay attention to the

injunctions of the *sharî'a*, the masters of the Naqshbandî maintain that one ought to keep the scope afforded by the sunna (A.Q. 87). Further, 'the Naqshbandîs are the strongest in keeping the animal soul in subjection and mortifying it by *yâd-dâsht*. It is like this because Shaykh Bahâ' al-Dîn himself was appointed as a moral therapist in central Asia where the people had a most vigorous animal nature' (*Tafh.* I,85).

Chapter six: Ethics

In order to lay a solid foundation for any exposition on moral philosophy, one needs first of all to determine the criteria to be applied to the moral category of 'good'. In Islam the crucial dilemma is this: Is a thing good because God has designated it as such or has He designated it as such because it is good? Shâh Walî Allâh apparently prefers to avoid making a choice on this issue. Rather, he likes to suggest that both assumptions hold good. Certainly, it is unquestionable that it is ultimately dependent upon God's decision whether something is to be regarded as good or repugnant (*Tafh.* I, 146). It is wrong, however, to think that God is like a master who is fond of giving senseless orders with the sole purpose of testing his servant's obedience. On the contrary, reason can in most cases discern the considerations of expediency contained in the divine commands and prohibitions (*H.B.* I, 4 f.).

Still, the designs of God's management extend beyond the sense deducible from most of His prescriptions. The very principle on which God created mankind is that the human individual should come up to the authenticity (*sihha*) specific to man (*H.B.* I, 51). Consequently, good is all that is in consonance with man's inherent nature (*fitra*), and vice is as repugnant to the agent as the braving of an ass (*Khizâna* 8). Man's felicity consists in giving full scope to the properties which are part of his nature (*H.B.* I, 36). 'All that leads to a correct evaluation of one's self, self-confidence and dignity, is righteous and appropriate' (*B.B.* 52). Sin is in essence a deviation from true humanity (*Ta'wîl* 18). When something yields what it should not yield, or does not produce what it ought to produce, we have to do with evil (*H.B.* I, 12). Therefore, according to the Delhi savant, is smearing the eyelids with *kuhl* (antimony used for blacking the eyelids) a permissible beauty treatment, because it accentuates properties allotted to the human species; but depilation or shaving the beard is reprehensible, for in that way changes in God's creation are effected (*H.B.* I, 107 & 182). In agreement with and at the root of this moral creed is the function God's legislative activity is credited with, namely to be the complement of His destination of things in the universe (*Sat.* 24). And if somebody raises the objection: 'Why is man under the obligation to perform the *salât* and to obey the Prophet, and why is he prohibited from adultery and thieving?', he is to be given the answer: 'These things are prescribed and forbidden him in precisely the same way as the herbivore is ordered to eat grass and is forbidden to eat meat, and beasts of prey are compelled to eat meat and are denied the consumption of grass' (*H.B.* I, 24).

Man's inherent nature has at its command excellences of three kinds:

- 1) *iffa* (abstinence from trivial and exciting pleasures), i.e. not becoming immersed in sensual delights, either by one's nature or one's practice. God regards believers who achieve this quality as godfearing and pious people;
- 2) *tafarrus* (discerning the intrinsic character of metaphysical truths). By virtue of this endowment the mind can quickly deduce knowledge from Qur'ânic verses, and can corroborate intuitively the reality of the Self-existent, the mission of the prophets, and the truth of the Resurrection;
- 3) *sakîna* (inner peace owing to a light descending from God). To its effects belong persistence in the duties of worship, endurance (*sabr*) in adversities, indignation at the enemies of God, and a stable psychic state (*Tafh.* I, 34 f. & II, 112).

Biologically, man belongs to the class of animals. Since his happiness depends on a full development of the potencies inherent in him, it is logical that the animal potency should not become divested of its own nature, should not belie its temperament and should not adopt a course of conduct contrary to its true character (*A.Q.* 51).

In man this potency is created in two ways:

- 1) as that of a violent and stubborn beast, like a sturdy stallion;
- 2) as that of a weak and flimsy quadruped, like a gelded animal (*H.B.* I, 26).

If these two types strive for an amelioration of their inner life, the former will resort to harsh disciplines and strenuous fasts and vigils, while the latter will apply himself to *dihkrs* only (*H.* XVIII).

Equally, the angelic potency in man is created in two ways:

- 1) like the *mala a'lâ*, whose most conspicuous characteristic is their becoming coloured by the knowledge of God's Names and Attributes, and their endowment with the gnosis of the World of Omnipotence;
2. like the *mala sâfil*, whose characteristic is to be stirred up as will-less beings by impulses showering down upon them from above (*H.B.* I, 26). The former are able to interpret divine language, the latter to read hidden thoughts of others (*ishrâf*) (*H.* XVIII). As for the interrelation of the angelic and animal potency, again two possibilities are given:

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- 1) a state of tension (*tajâdhub*) wherein each one strives passionately to meet its own needs. If one predominates, the influences of the other are diminished, and vice versa;
- 2) an inner integration of the angelic and animal potencies (*istilâh*). This can be realized if the angelic potency renounces its own higher goals and gets down to the level related to qualities as, for instance, rationality, generosity of the lower soul, proper sex behavior, preferring the general good to his own benefit, fixing the attention on the hereafter rather than being content with the fleeting life, whereas the animal potency, for its 67.

part, tries to rise above its own ends and to aim its efforts at what is not far from the interests of the general community (*H.B.* I, 26). People in whom this symmetry between both potencies is found are, as a rule, well-mannered. Rarely do they become excited. They conform faithfully to the injunctions, but when trying to reach a higher degree of perfection they travel at the speed of a little ant (*H.* XVIII).

- Among men in whom the angelic and animal potency are on strained terms four groups are prominent:
- 1) when a superior angelic potency of the type of the *mala a`lâ* and a powerful animal potency are in a state of tension the most eminent characters appear in the form of prophets, zealous devotees, and heroes of war;
 - 2) if an angelic potency of a lower rank and a powerful animal potency are in a state of tension within a person, he stands more in need of practising austerities than other people. With these, however, no performance of any extraordinary acts like miracles will ever be noticed;
 - 3) a tension between a superior angelic power and a weak animal potency produces individuals who withdraw from the world in order to please God;
 - 4) people who withdraw from the world for the sake of the Hereafter 1, however, develop from a tension between an angelic potency of a lower rank and a weak animal potency (*H.B.* I, 27 & *H.* XVIII).

Then, to categorize believers in accordance with the standard of ethical and religious values the Delhi divine also makes use of designations chiefly derived from the Qur'ân. Here again he distinguishes four groups:

- 1) the *mufahhamûn* (those who are instructed by God and the *mala a`lâ*) (cf. *Qur'ân* XXI, 79). This is the highest class. They are the type of integrated personalities, equipped with a well-balanced and harmonious disposition. From the side of the *mala a`lâ* they receive divine information and exalted experiences. Although after Mohammed prophethood was closed in principle, some elements of it continue to exist in the institution of *mufahham*-hood. Consequently, for the appearance of a *mufahham* similar conditions for a renewal of religion, guidance of people and so on are required as in the case of the mission of a prophet. So the *mufahhamûn* 'have become lights, embodiments and representatives of prophethood' (*H.* XIX & *H.B.* I, 84);
- 2) the *sâbiqûn* (outstrippers), *inter alia* mentioned in *Qur'ân* IX, 100. They are either people whose *latîfas* of *rûh* and *sirr* have gained mastery over their *qalb*, *`aql* and *nafs*, or individuals who refine their *qalb* and *`aql* with the aid of the sacred Law. The inner integration of their temperament (*mizâj*) implies that their animal nature is not too weak and their angelic nature not too low a level (*Tafh.* I, 188 f.). Among them can be counted:
 - a) the *mufarridûn* (persons who retire to lead a solitary religious life). 'A distinctive trait of theirs is that their bearing appears to be confined to the remembrance (*dhikr*) of 68.

God, always accompanied with a sound mental attitude and a proper self-control, while this remembrance takes possession of their whole bodies and powers' (*B.B.* 159);

- b) the *siddîqûn* (zealous persevering believers). 'A distinctive trait of theirs is that their deeds appear to be in entire conformity with their words. In addition they always display sound judgment, prudence and firmness of character';

- c) the *shuhadâ'* (martyrs). 'A distinctive trait of theirs is that the strength and energy spent in the cause of God and against the enemies of God are taken for granted and not taken as something enforced upon them. Their hearts, so to speak, are replete with lending help and support to the faith' (*B.B.* 158). 'He who is killed for the cause of God, takes along with him two characteristics: his *nasama* (spirit) in its entirety remains alive... The divine mercy... with which the Holy Enclosure and the angels near to God are filled up, enshrouds him' (*H.B.* II, 172).

- d) the *râsikhûn fi'l-`ilm* (persons who are firmly grounded in knowledge). 'A distinctive trait of theirs is that their knowledge seems to have descended from God directly into their very hearts, and seems to emerge as fire struck with a flint' (*B.B.* 158 f.);

- e) the *`ibâd* (true worshippers). An excellent example of this group is Abû Dharr al-Ghifârî (d. 652), a favourite companion of the Prophet: 'Already in the pre-Islamic period he used to pray to Allâh in a way

approved by God. When thereupon he became a Muslim, the teaching of worship in the right manner and the teaching of the repudiation of polytheism appealed to him right away' (B.B. 159);

f) the *zuhhâd* (ascetics). They are the people whose carnal faculty is highly purified (A.Q. 67). 'In their eyes the world is a nonentity and worldly-minded men are, according to them, like the dung of camels';

g) persons who have the capacity of functioning as a successor of the prophets. Such a successor (*khalîfa*) 'is driven to spread the religion of God and to relieve God's creatures of iniquities';

h) people with a fine character (*ashâb al-khulq al-hasan*). 'These are the persons who perfect magnanimity by generosity, humility, forgiveness to those who do them an injustice, endurance in the face of odd situations';

i) those who bear a resemblance to angels (*mutashâbihûn bi'l-malâ'ika*). These are the people who always observe the rules of purity, never cease praying, speak little and sleep only for a short while (since the greater part of the night is reserved for praying)... Thus they begin to discover angels and start to converse with them face to face' (B.B. 159 f.).

3) The *ashâb al-yamîn* (Companions of the Right), *inter alia* recorded in *Qur'ân* LVI, 27. Their *qalb* and *`aql* are only partly reformed since their angelic nature is of a very low level and their animal nature very weak (Tafh. I, 189). Among the Companions of the Right, to whom the majority of believers belong, can be reckoned:

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a) those who bear a resemblance to those who excel in good works. 'They apply themselves assiduously to reach the status of those who excel, but their disposition is too weak to succeed. They are not self-reliant. Consequently, their ambition lies in acquiring good habits';

b) those who are imitators of zealous persevering believers. 'They are concerned about nothing but sitting down in the latter's presence and listening to their speech';

c) those who are imitators of martyrs, of people detesting heretics, refuting Mu'tazilites and the like;

d) imitators of people who are firmly grounded in knowledge. 'Those do their utmost to write down knowledge concerning religious laws and to absorb knowledge coming from the Prophet, but for the understanding of those laws they do not go back to the primary sources... They are not disposed towards such research';

e) imitators of people who retire to lead a solitary religious life. 'Their tongues have become loose by the commemoration of God, whether they understand the inner meaning of it or not. Their knowledge of God is second-rate';

f) imitators of people with a fine character. 'These are of moderate virtuousness';

g) imitators of true worshippers. 'They use to perform all sorts of acts of supererogation';

h) imitators of ascetics. 'At a certain moment in a lonely place they may think of God and His punishments so that tears flow from their eyes. Thereafter, however, they become occupied again with their family, property and means of subsistence so that they forget God and His punishments almost totally';

i) imitators of those who bear a resemblance to angels. 'These are in the habit of taking extraordinary pains in cleansing their bodies, in observing purification and disciplining themselves' (B.B. 160 ff.). 'In short, there exist many kinds of *ashâb al-yamîn*. All of them can succeed in eliminating crookedness of their souls and are capable of acquiring some sort of salvation' (H. XX).

4) The *ashâb al-a'râf* (people of the elevated places, i.e. the heights between Paradise and Hell). Mention is made of them in *Qur'ân* VII, 472. There exist two kinds:

a) people who are sound in body and disposition but have not received the message of Islam 'as, for instance, inhabitants of high and inaccessible mountains. They do not attribute associates to their Lord, nor do they deny Him or believe in Him... being merely interested in things by which profit is gained. When they die, they return to a state of unconsciousness, and they do not suffer punishment or reap reward' (H.B. I, 116 f.).

b) 'persons of limited intelligence like small children, lunatics, insane people, silly fools, peasants and slaves. They are hardly able to know and worship their Lord, resembling water which, because of its liquid quality, cannot adopt any characteristic shape. They dispose of as much faith as the Prophet considered to be sufficient for a negro slave girl who

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pointed to the sky when he asked her: 'Where is God?' (B.B. 163 f.).

As we have noticed above, recognition of the interdependence between man's angelic and animal nature is imperative if we wish to get a clear perception of the constitution of the various moral categories in which mankind is divided. Also, and that may sound the more paradoxical, animal appetites appear to be

supplementary constituents of virtues specific to man, since the latter have as a substratum, out of which they grow and develop, the instincts which the human being has in common with the *abnâ al-jins*, i.e. his fellow animals. So man is in the lucky possession of surplus virtues (*al-akhlâq al-fâdila*), seven in number. They are, in fact, the result of the influence of three special capacities on the substratum of animal instincts. These three extra qualities, which are lacking in animals, are named *al-ra'y al-kullî* (motivation to act for the general weal), *zarâfa* (sensitivity to art and beauty), and *takammul* (inner urge to self-perfection). On account of these three incentives the *homo sapiens* is enabled to refine his environment and his own self. Valour (*shajā'a*), for instance, originates in the transformation of anger sublimated in the pursuit of the general weal (*B.B.* 28 ff.). One of the universal purposes this virtue can serve is the *jihād*.

The second one of these seven virtues called *'iffa* (displaying a proper sexual behaviour) is actually the outcome of *al-ra'y al-kullî*'s refining influence on the urges of our sex instinct. *'Iffa* in Shâh Walî Allâh's idiom certainly does not convey the connotation of chastity and continence. *'Affî*, so the Indian ethicist argues, is the man of a strong sexual need and a passionate love of women³, whereas it is exactly the natural and seemingly attitude for a woman to possess a conforming sense of attachment to one man only: 'Hence, there is a universal agreement that it is honourable for a man to possess several wives, but that it is immoral for a woman to have several husbands at the same time. This is the only correct *'iffa*' (*B.B.* 41 f.).

Further, when the lower impulses of arrogance and conceit are polished by *al-ra'y al-kullî*, its result is the virtue of *samâha* (gentleness). 'A gentle person is dignified, enduring, controlled, confident of the future, self-reliant, energetic, undaunted, generous, forgiving, not acquisitive, unassuming, and mild-mannered' (*B.B.* 43). If, however, the passions of arrogance and conceit are refined by *zarâfa*, the outcome is consistency in conduct (*al-samt al-sâlih*). This fourth of the seven virtues 'consists in a stable firmness of the heart in exercising control over external behaviour and thought, so that on the one hand no sudden delusive idea or momentary impulse, which might divert man from his habitual proceedings, arises and on the other hand no inconsistency in way of behaving is displayed'. Another object of sublimation are the organs of animals and men that produce sounds. If *zarâfa* penetrates into a strong voice, articulate and coherent speech can be effected. When *al-ra'y al-kullî* and the

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urge of self-perfection have a firm grip on it, the result of it is an availability of the fifth virtue, to wit a mastery of language which enables man to communicate the most profound mysteries. In this way the tongue acts as a mirror of the mind. This function, however, is not a monopoly of the tongue. Man's limbs are capable of the same, so that his external behaviour correctly reflects what is in his mind. If such has become an aptitude of a person, he possesses the sixth virtue, designated by the Delhi scholar as *diyâna*. This is surely a private interpretation of the term, for usually it denotes qualities such as piety and integrity. In the terminology of Shâh Walî Allâh *diyâna* stands for the capacity to co-ordinate man's cognitive faculties with his external behaviour so that his bodily gestures give an adequate expression of his state of mind. The seventh ability which marks the superiority of human potentialities over the animal disposition as such is *hikma* (wisdom). 'It is attained when the pursuit of the general weal and the inner drive toward self-perfection dominate man's excursions into all different fields of knowledge... It stimulates the mind to gain an over-all estimation of knowledge which it receives from intuition, ratiocination or divine light, as designed for mankind, and is called *shar'* (sacred Law)... Wisdom should not be understood to consist of subtle speculations - a speciality of philosophers and their imitators - nor of issues involving deep intuition... - a speciality of *sûfis* and their like. Wisdom is rather that which guides people to a sound disposition in their workaday life and which concerns practical knowledge' (*B.B.* 30, 38, 40 & 46 f.).

The human being, however, is not merely a refined animal being of a higher evolutionary stage; he also occupies a middle position between animals and angels. While angels can only be righteous and 'knowing' (i.e. acquainted with the Law) and animals do not have any notion of justice and knowledge of the Law, man as intermediate has been entrusted with *taklîf*, with being accountable. Consequently, he has the potential of perfection, not the actuality of it (*H.B.* I, 19 f.). To that end God has committed an angelic and an animal power to each individual's charge. In view of this disposition, the human individual has available to him two ways of improving his moral standard:

- 1) sloughing off his animal nature, turning to the World of Omnipotence (*jabarût*) and avoiding human contact. This is the method approved by adepts of illuminative Wisdom (*Ishrâqiyyûn*) and by mystics striving after trances (the *majdhûbûn*);
- 2) correction of one's animal faculties. In this case animality is 'wrapped up', aspects of it are still retained as a base. For this second way the model guides, *imâms*, are the abovementioned *mufahhamûn*, the highest class of men, who take on the supervision of religion and the world at the same time, favoured as they are by the light of prophethood (*H.B.* I, 52 f.).

The latter approach,consisting in the refinement of man's animal nature,is undoubtedly to be preferred. It is easier. The sloughing off that nature anyway requires the practice of
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rigorous austerities,an exertion beyond the capacity of the majority of people. Of more avail to society is,if by following in the footsteps of the *mufahham*,prophetic ends of general welfare are pursued. Conversely,the adoption of the first method results in sainthood,which is clearly of very limited utility to economic and social life.

If the second course is adopted,the most commendable line of conduct is to focus one's attention on the primary kinds of virtues,four in number being the best 'fabric' in which to 'wrap' animal nature. 'These virtues are precisely the ones which all prophets have exhorted the people to acquire. There can be no question of any abrogation (*naskh*) or change with regard to these virtues' (A.Q. 52).

The four primary kinds of moral excellences,advanced by the Indian scholar,are purity (*tahâra,nazâfa*),humility (*ikhbât,khudû*),submission of the carnal soul (*samâhat al-nafs*),and rectitude (*adâla*)⁴. Purity affects the most remote depths of the soul,refines it and links it up with angels,so that an affinity with them is created. Thus,purity prepares the soul for gaining moral perfection (*H.B.* I,54 & 174). By *dhikr* and recitation of the Qur'ân the second fundamental virtue,humility,is nourished. 'When a man devotes all his efforts to realizing God's presence throughout his being,... he experiences the same feeling of awe as do the rabble in the presence of kings... and gets into the same frame of mind as the *mala a'lâ* when standing in front of the bewildering majesty of their Creator' (*H.B.* I,54). Through humility he may obtain a glance at the World of Omnipotence in which the radiant light of divine Names and Attributes is seen (*jabarût*)(*H.B.* II,67). Thus,humility prepares the soul for the acquisition of perfection in knowledge,i.e. the capacity to absorb divine knowledge. Endurance and firm resolve are essential to the gaining of the third virtue,*samâhat al-nafs*,by which man attains complete independence from the impulses of the carnal soul (A.Q. 93). If this virtue has particular references to the impulses of the belly and sex,it is called *'iffa* (abstinence from trival and exciting pleasures); if it concerns the incentives of ease and enjoyment of life,it is named *ijtihâd* (religious strictness); and if it refers to promptings of restlessness and impatience ,it is qualified as *sabr* (voluntary resignation); if relating to lust for revenge,it is termed 'forgiveness'; if it regards impulses of greediness,it is named 'munificence' and 'continence'; and if it bears on instigations to transgress the Law,it is named *taqwâ* (fear of God).

The fourth cardinal virtue,`*adâla*,is primarily concerned with man's socio- political conduct. It is,to use Shâh Walî Allâh's own words,'the property to establish in an easy way a fair and salutary order in family and society'. Like *samâhat al-nafs*,`*adâla* is a comprehensive attribute,including a series of praiseworthy and useful sub-qualities. For if `*adâla* is connected with man's personal behaviour,his ways of sitting, standing,sleeping,speaking and dress,it expresses *adab*

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(urbanity); if it has to do with care of property,it is called *kifâya* (good care); if it pertains to household management,it is termed *hurriya* (common sense); if it refers to public issues,it expresses statesmanship(*siyâsa*); and if it bears on sociability,it is named 'civility' or 'solidarity' (*H.B.* II,68 f.). In conclusion,the Delhi savant remarks that there may seem to be some incongruity between *samâhat al-nafs* and `*adâla*,or as we should say,between personal ethics and social ethics,but he warns against putting up a sharp division between them. The prophets used to point out that both virtues are to all intents and purposes complementary: *samâhat al-nafs* rests on `*adâla*,and `*adâla* is made complete only by *samâhat al-nafs* (*H.B.* II,84).

For the cultivation of the four primary virtues,Islam supplies the appropriate means. *Salât*,connected with the purity of cult,offers room for the expression of humility and purity. The institute of *zakât* is eminently suited to the development of *samâhat al-nafs* and `*adâla* (*H.B.* I,164).

'The constitution (*hâla*) composed of those four cardinal virtues is called *fitra* (properly developed disposition)' (*H.B.* I,55). There are,however,three perilous veils that may prevent man from reaching such a disposition,to wit:

1. the physio-biological impulses of man (*tabî'a*). They are occasioned by hankerings of the body after things like food,drink,sexual intercourse,and so on. The concupiscent soul (*nafs*) submits to the orders of the body,harbours a secret love for those hankerings and fails to heed the original nature of man (*B.B.* 113 f.);
2. customs. These are an impediment if man's concern is to imitate the speech,style of dress,character,and social behaviour of the intelligentsia. In that case he will lend his ear to what he hears from his entourage instead of paying attention to information coming from the World of Omnipotence (*B.B.* 193)4; 3.

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misconceptions about God (*jahl bi'llâh*). 'Their substance is that man may have a mistaken concept of God because of his inability to think abstractly, which is due to his having no proper talent for intellectual intuition and speculative thought' (B.B. 114). The worst fallacies into which he can then fall are:

a) to believe that God is in the possession of human attributes;

b) to imagining that human creatures can possess divine Attributes. In the first case we have to do with anthropomorphisms, in the second with attributing associates to God (H.B. I,57).

To put it briefly: the real aim of man's morality is *sa'âda* (the ultimate felicity of human beings) which is achieved through the acquisition of virtues and refinement of the soul. Issues characteristic of it are nobility of character, sound supports for raising cultural and social standards, fine arts and high rank (H.B. I,50).

Winding up I should like to lay bare some striking features of Shâh Walî Allâh's ethical system by means of a comparison with

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Muslim moral philosophies of an earlier date. First of all, there is a notable difference regarding the characterization of vice and virtue. In the concept of classical Muslim ethicists like Ibn Sînâ (d. 1037), Miskawayh (d. 1030), al-Ghazâlî (d. 1111), al-Tûsî (d. 1274) and al-Dawwânî (d. 1501) vices are a question of a 'too much' (*ifrât*) or a 'too little' (*tafrîf*), and virtues are actually *wasâ'it*, the media between vices and their opposites. This view, of course, is directly borrowed from Aristotle's famous idea of the golden mean between two extremes which themselves are to be avoided. Munificence e.g. constitutes the happy medium between avarice and squander. Conversely, by Shâh Walî Allâh vicious men are considered as *qâsirûn*, as people who fall short. To him vice is more a matter of a lack, a deficiency in one or another virtue (B.B. 48). Murder is a vice, because a divine aspect is wanting in it. It deprives man of life and is as such contrary to the very intention of God Who is the bestower of existence (*Khizâna* 8). Further, there is a different opinion in respect of the aim that must be striven after in moral training. According to the classical Muslim ethics all effort should be spent in checking and suppressing *al-nafs al-shahwâniyya*, the concupiscent faculty, and *al-nafs al-ghadabiyya*, the irascible faculty, with the help of *al-nafs al-nâtiqa*, the reasoning soul of man. It is in fact, as stated by Ibn Sînâ, a fight for supremacy between the body, which is in possession of physical power, and *al-nafs al-nâtiqa*, which has intellectual power at its disposal. In the mind of the Indian scholar, however, the character of a person should be firm, untroubled and steady. For, if this be the case, the physical constitution (*mizâj*) of the body and man's ethical qualities (*akhlâq*) will reach perfection (B.B. 38). Mind and body are not antagonists, but are in friendly correlation to each other. Indubitably the most conspicuous divergence from his ancestors is Shâh Walî Allâh's evaluation of the so-called basic Platonic moral excellences, to wit *hikma*, *shajā'a*, *iffa* and *'adâla*. In his ethics the first three of them function on the lower level of *al-akhlâq al-fâdila* (surplus virtues), i.e. they are part of the additional qualities which animals lack, and are not qualified to serve as attributes to elevate man to the angelic sphere. Only *'adâla* has a corresponding place in the systems of both: the Hellenizing classical Muslim moral philosophers and the Delhi divine. Still, in the ideologies concerned the term *'adâla* has markedly different connotations. According to the former it describes the state of a person who in general obeys the moral laws. Many individual qualities, such as *sakhâ* (munificence), *hilm* (restraint) and *sabr* (self-control) Ibn Sînâ classes under the comprehensive idea *'adâla*. Although in the opinion of Shâh Walî Allâh the notion of *'adâla* occasionally might have any connection with the refinement of the individual soul, this virtue primarily refers to man's socio-political conduct. 'It is the very property to establish in an easy way a fair and salutary order in family connections as well as in society' (H.B. II,68). The same datum of different implications of *'adâla* is explicative of yet another remarkable difference of view. While for the Greeks and their

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Muslim adepts the saint-philosopher represents the ideal of virtue, in Shâh Walî Allâh's thought this role is played by the *mufahham*, the inheritor of prophetic talents. For him the prophet is superior to the saint exactly by reason of his value and utility for human society (*Kalimât-i tayyibât*, Delhi 1891, 164 ff.).

{1} Deeds performed to earn Paradise are valued much less by mystics - if not rejected with disdain - than acts testifying to one's love for God (A. Schimmel, *Mystical Dimensions of Islam*, North Carolina Press 1975, 39).

{2} According to Muslim exegetes this Qur'ânic verse refers to people whose good and evil deeds are equal in number and who must remain the last to enter Paradise (J.I. Smith and Y.Y. Haddad, *The Islamic Understanding of Death and Resurrection*, New York 1981, 91 & 218).

{3} If, however, passionate love of women induces men regularly to repudiate their wives and continuously to

contract new marriages, they do not differ factually from whoremongers (*H.B.* II, 138).

{4} Yet, one should not be too critical of customs. They may also render momentous support to the believer. A proper conveyance of the principles of belief in the Unity of God throughout the ages is extremely difficult, for it concerns an article of faith that can only be understood by intuition (*wijdân*). Only very few people have a full grasp of it. If there were no customs, belief in the Unity of God would be renounced. Moreover, those who are fully occupied with their work and lack inner peace would not concern themselves with the message of God if there were no customs. Nobody, therefore, should give up customs, unless he is endowed with reason and is well versed in making logical inferences on account of which his mind can dispense with the need for customs (*B.B.* 195 f.).

Chapter seven: The Life to Come

In the level of existence (*nash'a*) qualified as 'the place of Return' (*ma`âd*)(i.e. the Last Life) Shâh Walî Allâh distinguishes four stages:

1. the intermediary stage (*barzakh*)(i.e. interval of time between death and Resurrection),
2. the Grand Resurrection (*al-qiyâma al-kubrâ*),
3. the Day of Judgment (*yawm al-dîn*) and
4. Paradise and Hell (*Khizâna* 9).

No longer having his earthly body at his disposal as a 'riding-animal', man at his death becomes 'like a rider whose horse is taken away' (*Sat.* 25). The soul is no more agitated by external factors like hunger, thirst or anger, so it can reflect colours of the World of the Holy (*`âlam al-quds*)' (*H.B.* I,31). 'At that time the angelic nature becomes prominent while the animal nature weakens' (*H.B.* I,34). In this state he can only perceive with the help of inner senses such as the *hiss mushtarik* (*sensus communis*)(enabling him to hear without an ear, to see without an eye, and so on. In afterlife it produces ethereal shapes), *wahm* (power of abstraction) and *idrâk* (logical comprehension)' (*Khizâna* 4).

In the intermediary stage the *nafs nâtiqa* is still in need of a residu of the *nasama* (physical constitution being in the possession of nerve-centres that can absorb painful or pleasant sensations), so that man can be punished or pleased (*Tafh.* I,166 f.).¹ The trial to which man is subjected in the grave is different from the account to be rendered to God at the Day of Judgment: 'In the grave people are examined as to their singularities (*akhlâq*) and habits (*malakât*), whereas during the Last Judgment they will be questioned about their actions and religious convictions' (*Khizâna* 9). Deeds which deserve requital in the grave are fastened to the 'exterior' (*zâhir*) of the *nasama*, while deeds to be requited at the Resurrection are fastened to the 'interior' (*bâtin*) of the *nasama* (*Tafh.* I,234). In Hell only deep-rooted vices originating from the inner self will be punished, and not adventitious bad habits developed, for instance, under social pressure, such as making a show of one's works to men in order to be praised by them, and so on (*Tafh.* II,61).

'In the intermediary stage two kinds of requital are realized:

1. the experience of delight or pain there is gained from good or bad habitudes... Such an experience can be 'without a veil', as an ill person experiences sudden sensations; or 'behind a veil', as a sleeping person sees his rage in the form of a wild beast, his bilious temperament in the form of fires and flames;
2. inspirations effected by angels who are appointed at that place to confer favours or to torment. Thus these angels appear to him as solacers or desolators' (*Tafh.* I,252 f.).⁷⁷

As a consequence, most people of Mohammed's blessed community who, as a rule, possess only slight animal characteristics and a weak angelic nature endure punishment for the greater part in the grave, so that they will be assembled on the Day of Judgment as 'little burdened ones'. Those who are in the possession of a vehement animal nature - as is mostly the case with people of preceding religious communities led by a prophet - will incur more punishment at the Resurrection than in the grave; or rather, they may not even be punished at all in the intermediary stage, but only at the Resurrection (*Tafh.* I,234).

When in this manner some time has passed in the grave, the *nasama* becomes increasingly weaker in its structure and qualities, whereas one's *nafs nâtiqa* begins to awake from a deep sleep. In the view of the Delhi savant the entourage of the grave can rightly be compared with a dream-world. Hence on the Day of Resurrection man will be transferred from this state of dreaming into a sphere of existence where the objects witnessed are an objective reality, 'and not of a subjective character like a dream'. While during his stay in the grave man gets rid not only of typical features of his character but also of his body, at the time of his Resurrection from the dead he will appear to have at his disposal a mental power and a bodily shape that are specific to the human form. On the Day of Judgment nobody will be blind, deaf-and-dumb or suffer in similar fashion. He who happened to have had all kinds of delusions before, will now possess a sound mind, able to grasp adequate knowledge of God (*B.B.* 140,148 & 152 f.; *Tafh.* I,253).

Still, one should not think that the 'Gathering' (*hashr*) of the bodies and the reinstatement of the souls in them on the Day of Resurrection will be 'a new life. No, it is simply a complement of the former genre of existence, in the same way as indigestion is the consequence of overeating. Were it otherwise, people on that Day would be different from those who led a earthly life and would not be punished for what they had done' (*H.B.* I,37).

The reason why the dead may acquire a perfect shape at the Resurrection is that the souls are supposed to put on a bodily garment composed partly of corporeal elements and partly of constituents of the World of Prefiguration (*H.B.* I,19). As a consequence, an other-worldly body is more perfect and talented than a this-worldly body. In this world there are predicatives which only pertain to the body and others which

merely regard the mind. In the Hereafter, however, all predicatives are applicable just as well to the body as to the mind. There one might say: 'My body understands' like one says: 'My mind understands' (*Khizâna* 3). In such an environment 'conceptual matters' (*ma`ânî*) can take on a corresponding bodily form, as happened to David, to whom angels appeared representing two disputants in a lawsuit on whom he had to pronounce judgment. Subsequently, he realized that this symbolized his violation of Uriah's wife (*Qur'ân* XXXVIII, 21-24)... Most occurrences of the 'Gathering' will be of this kind... There the souls all alike will witness conceptual objects that have assumed a visible form. Accordingly, the true

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guidance promulgated through the mission of the Prophet will be represented by a cistern (sc. that of Kawthar, at which believers quench their thirst when entering Paradise), and the deeds for which the souls are held liable will be represented by the scale with a weight' (*H.B.* I, 37).

On the Day of Resurrection 'the World of Prefiguration' (*`âlam al-mithâl*) will be disclosed to man... If we wish to describe in common parlance the scenes which most of the people in this World will witness, we can say in the words of the messenger of God (see *Mu. îmân* 299): On that occasion, God will gather the people. And they will see Him without having doubts about seeing Him. And He will say: 'Let everybody follow the thing he worshipped'. He who worshipped the moon will then follow the moon; he who worshipped idols will then follow idols. Subsequently, he and the other pagans will fall into Hell. Alone the community of Muslims will be left, while there are still hypocrites amongst them. God will come to them in a shape different from the one they know. Then He will say: 'I am your Lord, so follow this shape'. The believers will cry out as the frightened Mary did when Gabriel suddenly appeared before her: 'We seek refuge from you with God' (*Qur'ân* XIX, 18). They will remain standing till their Lord will come to them in a shape they know. Thereupon He will lead them to Paradise' (*B.B.* 152 f.).

In another passage Shâh Walî Allâh gives the following more detailed account of this *visio beatifica*: 'On the Day of Resurrection God will be seen by the believers in two ways:

1. He will reveal Himself in a manner which will be even more convincing than what reason deems credible. It will be as if it is a beatific vision with man's physical eye. There is, however, no question of a being opposite, a geographical place, a colour or a perceptible form. This is the kind of vision taught by the Mu'tazilites and other people. This view as such is correct; but the mistake they make is to consider this interpretation of the beatific vision the only thing possible (sc. leaving no room for other explanations);
2. He will assume various shapes for them (*Tafh.* I, 145)² each of which will be adjusted to someone's private belief, ..., as is the case with somebody who sees everything as red, when he holds a red glass before his eyes, and sees everything as green, when he holds a green one before his eyes, while the thing observed is in both cases one and the same object (*Lamha* 53).

In Paradise 'bliss consists of two degrees:

1. Physical delights in the form of food, drink and sexual intercourse. All this is imprinted upon the World of Prefiguration, due to the fact that it functions as a mirror for the Corporeal World.
2. Being attracted to higher regions' (*B.B.* 154). Then two possibilities are left open to the blessed one:
 - a) to ascend by means of his *hajar al-baht*. Thus he will reach his home where the Most Supreme Theophany (*tajallî a`zam*) is constantly reflected. This is man's union with God;
 - b) to ascend by means of his *nafs nâtiqa*. Thus he will attain its

region of origin, the *nafs kullîyya* (Universal Soul). Finally, he may become a virtual image (*sha'n*) of the Divine Being (*Tafh.* I, 128)³.

{1} For, when sojourning in the grave 'two angels will come to him, one named Munkir and the other Nâkir. They will question him on his religion and on Mohammed. If he is a firm believer, he will reply: 'My religion is Islam and Mohammed is the servant and messenger of God'. A door will be opened for him towards Paradise, and a space will be made there for him as wide as the eye can see. A voice will say to him: 'Sleep the sleep of a bride'. But if he happens to be an unbeliever or a hypocrite, he will reply to the questions put to him: 'Alas, alas, I do not know'. At that moment his grave will be made so narrow that his ribs will be pressed together, and he will be struck with hammers of fire' (*B.B.* 150).

{2} The same idea is cherished by Ibn al-'Arabî. See Toshihiko Izutsu, *Sufism and Taoism*, Berkeley 1984, 83.

{3} In *Tafh.* 1, 227 this cycle of human existence is depicted as follows: The very beginning of human life is the moment a tiny piece of God's love becomes an individual *nafs nâtiqa* and is transported to the world here below. After its earthly life it experiences a second birth and becomes a jewel for the rays of God's

World of Omnipotence. The *nafs nâtiqa* itself becomes a mere appendage like a sixth finger of a man's hand. Finally, the *nafs nâtiqa* is annihilated, the jewel hidden and the rays vanish. At that moment God terminates the journey. The cycle has come to an end. The tiny piece of God's love has returned to its beginning, and relaxes from the hardships of the journey. In *Sat.* 24 we read that for every individual who comes into the world here below there is a cyclical process to go through. In the beginning he is an incorporeal `aql. When the appointed time has come, he descends into the world of the senses along the same stairs as he will ascend as soon as he has completed the duration of his earthly life. Then he will reach the same point as he started from, and he will again become the same separate `aql he originally was.

Chapter eight: prophetology

Man, the Koran teaches, was created as a *Homo religiosus* (*Qur'ân* XXX,30). A *dahrî*, a materialist, so Shâh Walî Allâh infers, is someone who rejects the knowledge of God granted him by birth (*H.B.* I,79). In other words, Islam has, in principle, no need of a founder of religion or of a religious guide. However, and that is also underlined by our author, man is neither an angel nor an animal. An angel cannot do anything but act righteously, and an animal is bound to follow his instincts without any commitment to ethical rules of conduct. Man is a combination of angel and animal. He possesses angelic leanings and animal passions (*H.B.* I,26). History shows that from time to time people deviate from true humanity. Then wrath is roused against them in the *mala a`lâ*. Nevertheless, agents are sent to warn them in order to give them the chance to mend their ways. 'For God has several tongues at His disposal and many modes of expressing His solicitude. Pouring His wrath upon a people in one tongue does not preclude the possibility of His showing solicitude for them in another tongue' (*Ta'wîl* 18). On that account, 'the divine Manager does not leave the affairs of mankind to take their own course. On the contrary, He is full of eternal grace to men and wants to establish a good order. For that reason He has sent prophets' (*Tafh.* I,179). In Islamic mysticism a controversial subject is the proper evaluation of prophet and saint. To whom of these holy men preference must be given? The *Qur'ân* is silent on this point. In contradistinction to the Old Testament account, in the *Qur'ân* frailties of prophets charged with a divine mission are seldom or never mentioned. On the contrary, in the Muslim scripture an unmistakable tendency is found to depict prophetic figures as saints.

In the days of Shâh Walî Allâh the question whether primacy should be granted to the prophet or the saint was of great moment. The followers of Ahmad Sirhindî stood up for the superiority of the prophet, because they stressed the need of a strict obedience to the *sharî'a* in order to counter the heresies introduced by the Moghul emperor Akbar. The admirers of Ibn al-`Arabî, however, took *wilâya* (sainthood) for the basis of all spiritual ranks. In the thought of Shâh Walî Allâh himself the prophet plays a most prominent part. Still, his great regard for the prophet does not prevent him, as will be expounded at the end of this chapter, from adopting in his prophetology several views of Ibn al-`Arabî.

There are several kinds of prophets, but they have at least one significant peculiarity in common: God did not create for their spirit (*rûh*) and body a *sûra mizâjiyya* (form composed of the four humours of the body, namely black bile, yellow bile, phlegm and blood), but a *jawwî* (ethereal) form in contradistinction to 81.

non-prophets whose acts and innate dispositions are dense (*wathîq*), proceeding as they do from a constitution of a blend of humours. Part of this prerogative is that they gain a *tajallî dhâtî* (manifestation of God's Essence) through a 'sloughing off' (*insilâkh*)¹ of this loosely attached ethereal form. Accordingly, when they concentrate their being upon God, at times this form of them fades away (*Tafh.* II,15).

Other properties with which every prophet is equipped are:

1. affinity of his *hajar al-baht* with the *tajallî a`zam*;
2. affinity of his faculty for retentive imagination (*khayâl*) with the *mala a`lâ* due to which he gains knowledge from the *mala a`lâ*;
3. affinity of his ordinary abilities with the *mala a`lâ* through which he gains immunity from sins, purity, piety and righteousness;
4. social engagement of his reasoning soul (*nafs nâtiqa*); thus his reasoning soul is in the possession of the capacity that when its shadow falls on our phenomenal world, mankind is favoured with the blessings of both moral training and well-ordered polity;
5. the capacity to keep three faculties of one-self in balance, that is to say that his concupiscent faculty, in the case of being profuse and abundant, is subdued by his leonine faculty; that his leonine faculty, in the case of fierce violence and 'boiling', is subdued by his rational faculty; and that his rational faculty, in the case of stiffness and drowsiness, is subdued by the *mala a`lâ*;
6. enjoying good fortune through victory over his enemies, winning the affection of beloved people, and continuance of his *milla* (religious community) and reign for a long period (*Qur'ân* 328; *Tafh.* I,240);
7. the seven virtues (which mark the superiority of human potentialities over the animal disposition as such) are fully developed in him. In addition to this, he dedicates himself to a world higher than this world, for in his very nature he is attuned to the World of Prefiguration, and his personage resembles the ideal human form because of the universal plan the divine Giver has in mind as seen in His gifts;
8. all his knowledge is a gift bestowed by God, and not the outcome of any brainwork or reflection pertaining to the cultivated habits of a human being. It is utilizable knowledge, not suited to abstract thought²;
9. he is endowed with a mentality that preserves from disobedience to the Law which has come from the

Creator;

10. he is capable of performing miracles. This may happen in many ways. Firstly, being distinguished from other people because of an inherent perfection gained by his contact with the Unseen World, wonderful acts may appear from his body and psychic disposition which are not to be expected from other people. Hence he possesses the gift of reading hidden thoughts in others, find his prayers answered, receives reliable announcements of glad tidings, has the capacity to do hard work as, for instance, walking long distances or being strenuously active, is able to

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produce effective charms, to keep complete control of the situation and to apply the technique of inductive divination (*firâsa*).

Secondly, if in the Unseen World it is deemed necessary that the prophet make a successful appearance so that his prestige is enhanced and his position strengthened, then he will gain victory over his enemies, and subdue them. Their hearts will be seized with fear...

Thirdly, after contact with the divine Sources, his mind is broadened; its knowledge and aspirations are now reckoned among the means of identifying the divine pre-determining Decree.

Fourthly, if atmospheric occurrences take place through celestial processes of causality, the Source of the human species may consider them to be a remedy for the corruption by which human society is afflicted.

Subsequently, the Chief Planner of the universe turns these atmospheric phenomena into a punitive miracle of the prophet (*B.B.* 175 f.). A striking instance of this is the Qur'ânic story of Sâlih and the she-camel. 'In the World of Sovereignty', Shâh Walî Allâh explains, 'every wickedness takes the shape of an animal, since wickedness possesses a natural affinity with animals... At the request of Sâlih the wickedness of the people appeared in the shape of a she-camel. When they had killed it, the wickedness (like a soul which is no longer confined to a body) spread on all sides. A hurricane arose, accompanied by earthquakes. In this way, the punitive wonder was adopted to the environment of the Thamûdites (to whom Sâlih belonged), since they lived in a region of mountains and caves' (*Ta'wîl* 21 f.).

According to common Muslim creed, prophets need to dispose of evidentiary miracles (*mu`jizât*) in order to prove their identity and to silence opponents. But Shâh Walî Allâh disagrees with orthodoxy in the postulate of their being a *conditio sine qua non*, and declares against it: 'In our opinion this is not a general rule. Vital for a prophet, however, is the disposal of signs to which people can give full credence. That may be a sylogistic demonstration (*burhân*), a heavenly book, or a mode of conduct (*samt*) distinct from that of other people' (*Khizâna* 5). Besides, various so-called 'miracles' that are thought to be occurrences infringing upon the customary course of things, turn out to be normal phenomena when observed more closely. To give an example. Many Muslim scholars imagine that the words 'the moon is split' in *Qur'ân* LIV, 1 refer to a miracle God performed for Mohammed. But according to the Delhi savant it is not necessary to assume that the moon actually split in two. In corroboration of this, the view of Ibn al-Mâjishûn (d. 829), a Mâlikite jurisprudent, is cited, stating: 'This phenomenon was occasioned by a cohesion of small particles of water into, so to speak, one plane. Behind it there was a mountain or a dense cloud. Together they produced the effect of a mirror. When the moon was reflect-

ed in it, people observed two moons in the sky. Since a part of the reflected and a part of the real moon were concealed, two halves were seen in the sky' (*Ta'wîl* 103 f.) 4).

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Shâh Walî Allâh exercises more caution in regard to orthodox scholars than in the case of his elucidation of the moon's splitting when he deals with the story of Mohammed's *mi`râj* (ascent to heaven): The journey by night to the Furthest Mosque in Jerusalem, and then to the Lote-tree in the Seventh Heaven took place in a bodily way while the Prophet was awake. This occurred however in a zone lying between the World of Prefiguration and the world below... There spiritual entities (*ma`ânî*) may assume a bodily shape. Hence all these events bear a metaphorical meaning' (*H.B.* II, 206) 5.

Another device to present preternatural events in a more or less plausible way is to resort to psychological and almost Freudian interpretations of wonderful prophetic tales. Thus we find the following version of the creation of Eve: 'Sensual tendencies were also alive in Adam. So he began hanker after a female of his kind, and in his excited state he imagined the form of a female. Accordingly, out of his imaginative vision woman came into existence' (*Ta'wîl* 13).

In the career of Mohammed⁶, in the archetype and evolution of prophethood, Shâh Walî Allâh discerns the following stages:

a) A preparatory one. At first, before his actual prophecy, three suns began to shine; i.e. three qualities which are also met in a *hakîm*, namely *hikma* (wisdom), *'isma* (purity of character) and *qutb bâtinî* (potential leadership), developed within him (*Tafh.* II, 13). Thus he became fit for Gabriel to descend to him with

revelations.

b) Next, a divine robe of honour (*khil'a*) is thrown on his human form (*Tafh.* I,177). Then three stars in the shape of *wahy* (revelation), *hifz* (protection), *qutb irshadî* (effective leadership) arose in opposition to the three suns earlier present. *Wahy* (revelatory process)⁷ is so to speak sublimated *hikma*; its concrete effect was eloquent and admonishing preaching. *Hifz* (protection), i.e. *'isma* on a higher level, implies a shunning of vices and a showing of commendable acts. In *qutb irshadî* (effective leadership) the abilities contained in the *qutb bâtinî* found full scope. Consequently, when these stars began to shine for the Prophet along with the three suns, he was commanded to proclaim the message of God to both men and *jinn*s.

c) But when his attachment to the higher world continued to increase and his noble character was progressively polished⁸, the three stars turned into shining full moons. At that time it was said to him: 'Utter openly that which with you are charged' (*Qur'ân* XV,94). In this way he was ordered to oppose and argue with the unbelievers in Mecca.

d) Next these full moons became, on account of his strong attachment to the angels, 'inward' suns. Then he was told: 'Leave is given to those who have been wronged' (an inaccurate citation of *Qur'ân* XXII,39); and he was commanded to emigrate to Medina. From that moment he belonged to the Messengers of firm intention (*'azm*).

e) In the last phase of Mohammed's prophetic appearance 'there did not remain any spot on earth but Divine Light had entered

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therein in a most brilliant form' (*Khizâna* 6). So he fulfilled a double mission; a limited one on behalf of the sons of *Ismâ'îl*, and a universal one for the whole world (*H.B.* I,84)⁹.

In Shâh Walî Allâh's prophetology the usual discussion whether prophecy is a natural gift or merely a divine favour is evaded, as well as whether it can be acquired by human effort or whether it depends entirely upon heavenly interference. The reason is that, on the whole, the interest of the Delhi scholar is not focussed on subtle distinctions between the domains of God's activities and those of man. In his system of thought all attention is drawn to the interrelation of cosmic, divine, terrestrial and human powers and effects. In the universe anything and everything is mutually correlated, a premiss emerging from the concept of *wahdat al-wujûd*.

As for the appointment of a prophet two complementary conditions ought to prevail:

1. The presence of a man with extraordinary properties. For the receipt of *wahy* he needs to possess special intellectual gifts such as, for instance, a close spiritual affinity with the *mala a'lâ*; and for the sake of the preservation of his working knowledge he should be in the possession of *'isma* (purity of character) (*Izâla* I,51). Such a personality becomes an instrument that God wants to have for Himself alone. Hence He

declared to Moses: 'I have brought you up for My own sake' (*Qur'ân* XX,41) (*H.B.* I,24).

2. On earth there must be a situation that presses urgently for the mission of a prophet.

Only when both conditions are met, 'God will decide from above the seven heavens to reform the people and to rectify the crooked by putting into the heart of the most wholesome and most righteous of men the impulse to preach correct knowledge to his people so as to rouse them to actions of moral improvement' (*Izâla* I,51). An occasion calling for the appearance of a prophet is an absolute necessity. Thus, had there not been the perverseness of the Ninevites, Jonah would not have become a prophet (*Khizâna* 5).

In the view of the Delhi savant there have been three crucial moments in history when the intercession of a prophet was particularly required. Accordingly he distinguishes three periods of *jâhiliyya*, paganism, instead of two as is done in current Muslim theology. Besides the epochs between Adam and Noah, and between Jesus and Mohammed, he marks out a third one, to wit the era after the public appearance of Hûd and Sâlih. At that time we see the emergence of communities with worshippers of stars and pantheists. It is eventually Abraham who succeeds in dispelling this darkness of religious decay by his fight against astrology (*B.B.* 188 f.).

These actions of reform, it should be noted, had still a wider import than being merely a refutation of false belief. They occasioned simultaneously a turn in the history of religious thinking. In the period after Adam righteous believers used to

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assume the existence of particular potencies in heavenly bodies which determined the course of events on earth. *Idrîs* is to be looked upon as the first astrologer (*Ta'wîl* 17). From the time of Abraham, however, believers began to recognize that apart from cosmic powers it were particularly the angelic forces which had a regulative function in the history of the world. In this new age knowledge trickled

from them upon the minds of the leaders of humanity and so *sharîf* as came down for the guidance of mankind (*Ta'wîl* 28). 'The *tajallî a`zam*, being the jet of water of the powers of the Self-existent', the Delhi scholar sets forth in another writing, 'has various *sha'ns*, as God states: 'Every day He is in a (new) mode of being (*sha'n*)' (*Qur'ân* LV,29)10. Hence the prophets, as interpreters of eternal language, announced the *sha'n* which had arisen in their age and on account of which they had been sent... It is because of this that the views of prophets differ in respect to laws, the mystic path, the hereafter and so on. In this way one may understand why the statements of Jesus about spiritual delights to be enjoyed in the Hereafter differ from ... remarks of Mohammed which make mention of bodily delights in the life to come that will be derived from food and drink, sweet ladies and smart clothes. So the *sha'n* of which Jesus was the interpreter went by the *hajar al-baht* and the organs of spiritual communication, called *sirr* and *rûh*, whereas the *sha'n* of which Mohammed was the interpreter was adjusted to less refined organs of spiritual communication (as the *nafs*, *qalb* and *`aql*)' (*Tafh.* I,116). Similarly, the type of prophetic miracles was adapted to the spirit of the age. People in the time of Moses were fond of magic. Consequently, God provided Moses with the miracle of the staff and white hand. People in the time of Mohammed were renowned for poetry and rhetorics. Accordingly God sent down the miracle of the *Qur'ân* (*Tafh.* I,81 f.).

To my mind, this is a very important viewpoint of Shâh Walî Allâh. In the West an often repeated objection to Islam is that this faith would not know of a God who is continuously acting in the history of men, and that the idea of a constant divine concern for mankind would be alien to the teachings of the *Qur'ân*11. Well then, the Delhi divine argues, Abraham acted not only as a preacher but functioned also as an instrument of God's progressive revelation. This evolutionary theory is still more explicitly developed in Shâh Walî Allâh's exposition of the sciences which he finds explained in the *Qur'ân*. The third science consisting of the calling attention to God's favours to men, demonstrated *inter alia* in His creation of heaven and earth is a knowledge with which Abraham was especially endowed. The fourth science pertains to reminding the people of the 'Days of the Lord', i.e. events Allâh caused to happen in order to reward the obedient and to punish the sinner. That kind of instruction became the privilege of Moses. The fifth science relates to the reminder of death and what follows upon it, i.e. eschatology. Insight into that knowledge was revealed to the seal of prophets, Mohammed (*H.B.* I,55).

The prophets provide further benefit by means of their life

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stories insofar these tales also may denote significant 'basic ideas' (*usûl*). To demonstrate this point the Delhi scholar composed his *Ta'wîl al-ahâdîth*. The title is derived from *Qur'ân* XII,6 where Jacob says to Joseph: 'And God will teach you the elucidation of tales' (*F.K.* 46). And when the same Joseph states: 'Thou (o God) art my *walî* (Guardian) in this world and the next' (*Qur'ân* XII,101), he implicitly - so Shâh Walî Allâh concludes - regards himself a *walî Allâh* (a favourite of God). And that gives the Muslim Indian mystic cause to discover a close affinity between himself and Joseph, and to express the hope that he might become an 'expansion' of that godly man (*Khizâna* 5). In other words, we are given to understand that that just as Joseph in his capacity of *walî Allâh* had been taught the explanation of events prefigured in dreams, the Delhi scholar - being an expansion and namesake - has been endowed with equal talents enabling him to disclose the deeper meanings of the prophetic stories.

Let us consider a few examples. Reared in a pagan milieu, Abraham at first had faith in divine powers of the heavenly bodies. But afterwards he is shown that their setting points out that they did not create him. Here the root idea is God's jealousy. The story itself is merely the outward form (*Tawîl* 4 and 7). The *Qur'ân* tells us that at a given moment God commanded the angels to prostrate themselves before Adam. The underlying idea of the myth, it is argued in this treatise, is to explain that by prayers and pleadings in favour of the sons of Adam the angels are actually worshipping God. Hence Adam and his sons are a *qibla* for their worship (*Ta'wîl* 13). 'You should realize', so we read in the Introduction to the *Ta'wîl al- ahâdîth*, 'that whenever God from the Primal Level where He resides brings down knowledge upon mankind via the tongue of a human being, it is not communicated by tropes and allusions, ... but put in terms of everyday occurrences. This happens in the same way as when knowledge of what is about to take place is infused in a person's senses. He then receives a dream made up of voluntary or compulsory actions and of inanimate or animate bodies somehow indicating what is about to occur... (After all) all things that happen in the world are virtually dreams; they are made up of root ideas and indistinct shapes. One of the root ideas implies that God wants His worshippers to live prudently by means of inspirations, transformations (effected in the properties of elements, as for example in the fire which produced a cool effect as soon as Abraham had been thrown into it by his opponents) and contrivances... Accordingly, He selects from the course of events the one which at that very moment furthers the object of pursuit in the best manner... The event which then appears represents the 'outward shape' and the dream as such, while God's prudent management represents the root idea and the purport of the dream' (*Ta'wîl* 3 ff.).

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Likewise the prophets appear to be valuable for the illustration of mystic experiences. To the mind of Shâh Walî Allâh they can function as proper prototypes in an ascending progression of stages on the road a mystic travels to reach ecstasy. The way
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itself is marked by seven *dawâ'ir* (regions¹²), which have to be traversed one after the other (*Tafh.* II,62 f.). The first of them is the *dâ'ira* of faith. This is the province where Adam resides as the exemplary model. Faith implies obedience to God with heart and body. This was an occupation specific to Adam who aimed at the correction of his lower soul (*nasama*) for which he had to fight with the Devil (*Tafh.* II,71). The *nasama* as such often tries to draw man's reasoning soul (*al-nafs al-nâtiqa*) to lower impulses. Consequently, if the *nafs nâtiqa* wants to come into closer contact with its origin, the *nafs kulliyya* (Universal Soul), it must loosen its fetters with the *nasama*. Now that is exactly the activity, in which the mystic traveller is engaged in the second *dâ'ira*, called *sharh al-sadr* (expansion of the breast) (*Tafh.* II,64). Having attained this level a believer no longer cares for property, leadership, delicious food, fine clothes, women, personal revenge (*Tafh.* I,39). By reducing the power of the *nasama* he follows the example of Idrîs (Enoch), who is the prophet belonging to this *dâ'ira*. In the third phase, named *qurb al-nawâfil* (proximity to God reached by supererogative works), the *nafs nâtiqa* is prepared for the receipt of theophanies. In that stage one becomes, as is stated in a famous *hadîth qudsî* (which gives words spoken by God), the ear, eye and foot of God. The exemplary model in this territory is the prophet Noah, as he is the prototype of the fighters of moral depravities. The fourth *dâ'ira*, designated as *qurb al-wujûd* (proximity attained during an overflow of God's pure Being), is marked off by *hikma*, which is insight into creation. Besides, it supplies immediate knowledge concerning the divine Names and Essence (*Tafh.* II,161). This is the speciality of Abraham and Joseph. Then follows the region of the *qurb al-farâ'id* (proximity to God reached by a punctual fulfillment of religious duties), on account of which God irradiates Himself in the mirror of the *'ayn thâbita* (*Khizâna* 4). The exemplary model in this domain is Moses to whom God manifested Himself in a fire as he was of a fiery nature (*Tafh.* II,106). The sixth *dâ'ira* is characterized by *qurb al-malakût* (proximity brought by association with the world of angels). The foundation of this way of approaching God is the *hadîth qudsî*: 'If God loves a creature, He tells Gabriel. Then Gabriel conceives loves for him, and makes the name of the chosen one known to other angels, whereupon they conceive love for him' (Mu. *al-Birr wa'l-sila* 157). Here we are on the ground of Jesus, 'an angel walking on earth' (*Ta'wîl* 76). He is the prototype of a being coloured by the dye of God, a property he inherited from the breathing of Gabriel (*Khizâna* 5). The last *dâ'ira* is that of *kamâl* (full maturity). This is the field of Mohammed (*Tafh.* II,70). 'One of the characteristics of the *qurb al-kamâl* is that God takes care of His servant either openly or in secret, so that the management of the latter proceeds in accordance with divine wisdom... Another typical feature is that the means of communication the angels use for him are the same as applied by Mary (cf. *Qur'ân* XIX,26): intimations instead of actual speech'
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(*Tafh.* II,123).

In view of the teachings prophets have to propagate, the Delhi divine remarks: 'You should realize that prophethood has to comply with people's *fitra* (inherent nature)... Every nation and every climatic region (*iqlîm*) has its own *fitra* upon which its affairs are based. Thus it is part of the *fitra* of Hindus to find the slaughter of animals repugnant and to believe in the eternity of the universe. It is of the nature of the Semites and Persians to permit the slaughter of animals and to believe in the createdness of the universe. Consequently, a prophet sets out to see what kind of creeds and customs people maintain, and he sanctions and adopts what suits the refinement of souls, rejecting what injures them... Hence it is certainly not a matter of surprise that the modes of action of prophets differ in accordance with the different material they have to deal with' (*Tafh.* I,68)¹³. Another characteristic of their instruction is 'the habit of prophets not to broach subjects that are beyond the mental range of the people... On that account they do not require people to call up a picture of their Lord through epiphanies and visions, or by means of logical demonstrations and reasoned arguments..., inasmuch as this is only possible if people practise austerities, or frequent the society of scholars for a long period... Equally it is not their habit to discuss matters which are not relevant to the refinement of souls and the rule of the community as, for instance, the explanation of natural phenomena... For that reason God diverted the attention of the people from the question they had brought before the Prophet concerning the cause of the wane and increase of the moon. Instead He gave an exposition of the advantages of calendar months saying: 'They (the new moons) are times appointed for the people and the pilgrimage' (*Qur'ân* II,189)' (*H.B.* I,86).

Besides having to exercise restraint in consideration of the limited mental range of the average believers, the Prophet appears equally cautious in mystical affairs. He confines himself to exposing only the

first two of the seven stages (*dawâ'ir*) of the journey a mystic might like to accomplish . People could become confused if the five remaining lofty ones were also dealt with. Moreover, the actual mission prophets had to execute was limited to leading mankind from the darkness of their bio-physical nature to the light of the first two stages, i.e. of *îmân* and *sharh al-sadr*. Then they are fit to enter Paradise (*Tafh.* II, 138 f.).

In conjunction with this, another comparable issue one should be careful with is an evocation of the senses. The reason why Mohammed himself did not practise poetry was its possible entanglement and mix-up with religious exhortation. Both of them overpower the soul, but unlike poetry religious exhortation gives full scope to man's *fitra*, created in him by God (*Tafh.* II, 127).

Curiously enough, it is not merely mankind that profits from the appearance of prophets. God Himself may make excellent use of them for His own ends, since He badly needs these functionaries as a substratum for the revelation of His Names and Attributes.

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Hence the *`ayn thâbita* (archetypal individuality) of a prophet can typify one of the manifold aspects of the Divine Essence. Adam, for instance, appears to be a living symbol of the Divine Name *al-murîd* (the Purposer), that is to say He Who is busy with creating, as this prophet was intent on procreation and cultivation of land. Idrîs is the earthly manifestation of the Name *al-subbûh* (the Transcendental), a qualification still higher in rank than the Name *al-quddûs* (the Holy) which is represented by Noah. The difference between the two is the same as found between the meanings of *`adam* (non-presence in the world) and *salb al-wujûd* (deprivation of existence). On that account the people of Idrîs were not destroyed as were the people of Noah. For the same reason Idrîs acquired proximity to God through the higher worlds and Noah through the lower worlds. Abraham is a perceptible counterpart (*timthâl*) of the Divine Epithet *al-hayy al-qayyûm* (the Living and Self-subsisting). He acquired this perfection in a rudimentary form, while the Lord of the Messengers obtained it in an unfolded fashion¹⁴. This is why Mohammed's institutionalized religion (*milla*) is called 'the *milla* of your father Abraham' (*Qur'ân* XXII, 78) (*Khizâna* 5).

One major issue of the prophetic mission is intercession: 'The *shafâ'a*, so Shâh Walî Allâh explains, 'is actually a full manifestation of a fascinating Epithet of God, namely *al-hayy al-qayyûm*, of which Mohammed has become the earthly representation. The object of this Attribute is to obliterate the evil deeds written down in the Scrolls (with the register of good and bad deeds that are to be presented on the Judgment Day). Every prophet is entitled to intercede according to the quality of his perfection and proximity to God. The nearer people are to the prophets the greater the chance is of their intercession being granted. On that account it was prescribed by the Law that benedictions and blessings be pronounced on them (*Khizâna* 9). 'Our prophet realized that the main aim of his mission was to act as an intercessor for the believers and to serve as a medium for very special mercy on the Day of Judgment. So he has retained the most significant intervention... for that Day' (*H.B.* II, 75). Nonetheless, according to the Delhi scholar, the intercession of both, Mohammed and Jesus, will prove to be of analogous importance: 'At the investiture of Jesus in the time of the Resurrection there will be a most illustrious intercession for his followers, and at the investiture of our Prophet there will be an equal one for his people. Both of them are jets of water of the same turbulent river and both of them are musical sounds of the same sonorous flute' (*Tafh.* I, 118).

In the controversy on the priority of the prophet or the saint, it is obvious that the Delhi savant underlines the eminence of the former. Similarly, his acknowledgment of the relevancy of the *sharî'a* is evident. But this does not imply that he follows unconditionally the line of Ahmad Sirhindî and that he would be impervious to the thought of Ibn al-`Arabî. The explanation of the significance of the prophets he offers in *al-Khayr al-kathîr* shows a striking resemblance with elucidations found in Ibn al-

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`Arabî's *Fusûs al-hikam*, containing a summary of the teaching of the prophets from Adam to Mohammed. And when by calling himself an Uwaysî he gives expression to his spiritual attachment to the Prophet (*F.K.* 141), he is again in complete agreement with Ibn al-`Arabî who as a disciple of the legendary al-Khidr joins the ranks of the sûfis designated Uwaysîs (*cf.* H. Corbin, *L'Imagination creatrice dans le Soufisme d'Ibn `Arabî*, Paris 1958, 26). And just as the latter he claims for himself the ability to discern intuitively between the basic teaching of religion as has been handed down by Mohammed and which part of the traditions has been crept in and tampered with (see the final lines of his autobiography *al-Juz' al-latîf*). And when he argues that the relation of the pre-existent Mohammed to the other prophets and his heirs is similar to that between a whole and its parts (*Fuyûd*, 11th Vision), he repeats the teachings of his great predecessor (*cf.* A.E. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid Din Ibnul Arabi*, Lahore n.d., 72). The most suitable indication, however, of his attitude of compromise in the dispute on the primacy of the prophet or the saint is that he credits himself with the function of a *hakîm*, i.e. the connecting link between the prophet and the *walî* (*Khizâna* 4).

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{1} The prophets slough off their humanity and thus move toward the angelic stage (Cf. Ibn Khaldûn, *The Muqaddimah*, tr. F. Rosenthal, London 1958, I, 199). Moreover, apart from being distinct in character, prophets also differ in quality and success. In general, the following two major classes can be distinguished:

- a. The great ones. These are they who voice the language of the epoch and are born under the conjunction of the two propitious planets Saturn and Jupiter). Triumph and victory are inseparable from them.
- b. Those who preach in order to force proof on the people, and act in accordance with God's wont when assigning and announcing a disaster before it actually happens (*Tafh.* I, 102).

Further, a major difference between Mohammed and the other prophets is that the *tadallî`azîm* (God's mighty preservation) remained with him after his death in contrast to the other prophets who were cut off from it as soon as, at the end of their life, their mission had been accomplished or terminated. That is because at the Resurrection Mohammed will be a witness against all people as well as an intercessor for the sinners amongst them (*Fuyûd*, 10th Vision).

{2} The prophets were *ummîs*, i.e. men whose hearts were not spoiled by outward intellectual achievement and learning. *Ummî*-hood of prophets implies that 'they did not classify the primeval and eternal Names of God... They considered them as belonging to one and the same level... Reference is made to them in God's Word: 'Say, all things are from God' (*Qur'ân* IV, 78)'. And they considered the renewing Names (*asmâ' mujaddida*) which come after them and have to do with location in being and guidance as belonging to a different level. Reference is made to the latter

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in God's Word: 'Whatever good visits you is from God; whatever evil visits you is from yourself' (*Qur'ân* IV, 79)... The prophets kept aloof from making any mention of *a'yân* or *nufûs nâtiqa*, and they only began to explain the properties of the *nasama* (*Tafh.* II, 155). The same holds true of their knowledge of esoterics. Mohammed and the other prophets gave no indications concerning speculative mysticism (*`ilm haqâ'iq*). They merely offered information about the practice of *sûfism* (*`ilm-i sulûk*) and the refinement of the soul (A.Q. 22).

{3} Cf. *Tawîl* 8 f.: 'You should know that when God in His rule of the world displays a breach in the course of nature, He nevertheless does this within the framework of the customary sequence of natural events, however unstable this may be. On this account breaches in the course of nature still have slight natural causes. It is as if these natural causes are always there whenever God's decree is executed', for 'a violation of the laws of causes and effects gives God little satisfaction' (*H.B.* I, 17).

{4} This hypothesis is qualified by the present day scholar Muhammad Zâhid al-Kawtharî (d. 1952) as one of the eccentricities of the Indian divine, and rejected on the ground that the practice of the enchantment of the eye is unworthy of a prophet (*Husn al-taqâdî*, Cairo 1948, 97).

{5} 'It is obvious', so Sayyid Ahmad Khân concludes from this passage, 'that Shâh Walî Allâh was not sure that the *mî`râj* did take place in a bodily way, though he does not say so plainly. He speaks of a *mî`râj* with a *barzakhî* body, from which it follows that this did not occur with an ordinary body. Thus his view agrees with those who claim that it was not performed in the body' (Sayyid Ahmad Khân, *Tafsîr al-Qur'ân*, Aligarh 1895, VI, 66).

{6} I.e. when the third phase of Mohammed's evolution was entered upon and he had started his earthly existence. Initially, in the first phase he existed as the so-called *haqîqa muhammadiyah* (Reality of Mohammed), representing the first thing created by God. From this all other realities derive. Accordingly, his Reality is the connecting link between God and the remaining realities. The second phase is named *al-rûh al-muhammadiyah* (Spirit of Mohammed). Thus all prophets derive their knowledge from the *rûh* of Mohammed which functions as the intermediate link between them and God (*Fuyûd*, 45th Vision).

{7} I.e. *wahy khafî*, Mohammed's own ideas, as opposed to *wahy jalî*, t.w. the *Qur'ân* (cf. Marcia K. Hermansen, *The Conclusive Argument from God*, Leiden 1996, 410).

{8} Shâh Walî Allâh, however, is too faithful to the traditions to assign any kind of impeccability to Mohammed. Commenting on the prophetic saying: 'There is at times some sort of cloud upon my heart; on a day like that I seek forgiveness from God a hundred times' (Mu. *al-dhikr wa'l-du`â`* 36), he declares: 'The cloud points out that the Prophet was enjoined to adopt the same kind of soul as that of the average believer... , so that he might offer a clear example for the believers when laying down rules for them' (*H.B.* II, 76).

{9} Accordingly, 'In consideration of the completion of this

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universal mission the Prophet obtained laws in addition to the Torah such as, for instance, those pertaining to

poll-tax,land-tax,expeditions against the polytheists and measures of precaution against falsifications of the Holy Writ' (*H.B.* I,123).

{10} 'By *sha'n* I mean that commensurate with divine wisdom the Universe has periods and phases. Whenever a new period arrives 'God makes known in every heaven what is to be its task' (*Qur'ân* XLI,1),and the *mala a`lâ* make arrangements consistent with this wisdom,pass relevant enactments for men and tell them what will serve the public interest' (*H.B.* I,80).11 Cf. for instance L. Gardet in *EI* (New edition) I,406: ' (In the *Qur'ân*) there is,strictly speaking,no progressive revelation of Allâh'.

{12} These regions parallel the seven celestial spheres,and refer to the story of the *mî`râj* (Mohammed's ascension to heaven),a favourite sûfî symbol to express the mystic finding during the advancement from one stage to another on the sûfî path. This again an instance of Shâh Walî Allâh's dependence on Ibn al-`Arabî since the latter similarly stocks the spheres with a prophet into whose mouth he puts a part of his mystical system (Cf. A.E. Affifi,*The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid Dîn Ibnul Arabi*,109 f.).

{13} 'Just like a doctor who for his prescriptions has to take into account particular conditions of his patients. So he commands the youth something he doesn't the old man' (*H.B.* I,89).

{14} Abraham's acting as the prototype and model for Mohammed is not only the Qur'ânic way of presenting the matter but also the view held by Muslim orthodoxy. In this connection,it may be interesting to note that,notwithstanding this,in the opinion peculiar to the Delhi scholar it is Moses,and not Abraham,who bears the closest likeness to the Seal of prophets: 'In consideration of the abundance of all sort of abilities,of the prophets Moses most resembles our Messenger' (*Khizâna* 5). 'Among the prophets... Moses and Mohammed alone have reached the highest level in the art of legislation,have perfectly commanded the injunctions of the *shar`a*,and have comprehended all aspects of divine instruction' (*B.B.* 175).

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Chapter nine: People of Eminence

A. *Kâmil* (Perfect Man)

'A person belonging to this grade is he upon whom the light of the Divine Man (i.e. the prototype of the human species) is reflected, so that in respect of knowledge and mystic experiences he becomes dyed with His dye without being commanded to strive after perfection; the impulse to follow the right direction arises spontaneously in his heart' (B.B. 172). These are the minds of which the *mala a'lâ* avail themselves for their ends,

and which appear to belong to prophets, authors of a new doctrine and fighters of injustice (A.Q. 165).

These extraordinary talented persons are not, however, merely useful instruments at the service of the *mala a'lâ*; on the contrary, they themselves may enter into the ranks of the latter as soon as after death 'the coarse garments are thrown from their bodies. For it not as common people think, that a Perfect Man who dies is lost to the world. Quite the reverse, he (who beforehand was composed of accidental qualities) now becomes a pure substance and still increases in perfection' (*Fuyûd*, 11th Vision). Having joined the *mala a'lâ* 'they become the 'stomach' for the bounteousness of God, the 'ears' for hearing many prayers of the inhabitants of the earth, and the 'tongues' for many a suitable inspiration' (*Lamha* 43).

B. *Hakîm* (Wise Man)

In the class immediately below the prophets are *hakîms*. They function, so to speak, as an intellect in a state of latency for the benefit of prophecy which in that way can be transformed into an active intellect (*Khizâna* 7). Accordingly, 'they are experts in moral science and in knowledge pertaining to the second stage of man's socio-economic development, in which human society develops into a city-state' (B.B. 172). So they possess a refined practical knowledge in the fields of ethics, domestic management and politics (*Izâla* II, 2).

Next, they serve as an intermediary between saints and prophets. The prophet as an *ummî* (whose mind is a *tabula rasa* free from preconceived ideas) receives instructions directly from God. The *hakîm* gains them indirectly, i.e. through his *`ayn thâbita* (archetypal individuality). The saint also acquires them indirectly, not through his *`ayn thâbita* which is of a transcendental level, but through his inmost being (*sirr*) which is bound to his empirical existence (*Khizâna* 4).

Hakîms are favoured with the possibility of gaining a very close proximity to God by means of an overflow of God's pure Being (*qurb al-wujûd*). They are characterized by an extraordinary submission of the carnal soul (*samâha al-nafs*) (*Tafh.* II, 66). The origin of the *hakîm's* knowing God is the *`ayn thâbita*; when he watches his *`ayn thâbita*, his eye penetrates to God. As a result

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he acquires *hikma*, *isma* and *wajâha* (*Khizâna* 4). *Hikma* (wisdom) is the science by which the true nature of the existing things can be perceived (*Tafh.* II, 24). It is revealed in its earthly dimensions by clairvoyance (*firâsa*), vigilance and quickness of understanding. The principle lying at the root of *isma* (purity of character) is that he who seeks God by *qurb al-wujûd*, cannot reflect anything evil in his character or doings. Its mark is *iffa*, i.e. abstinence from trivial and exciting pleasures. *Wajâha* (i.e. being held higher than other people in the eyes of God) is, in essence, a being gifted with the capacity to divest oneself of one's earthly shape so that the reasoning soul (*nafs nâtiqa*) can assume its original form. Its characteristics are dignity, assurance and authority (*Khizâna* 7).

It is necessary that a *hakîm* be self-possessed, i.e. attaches but little value to a particular mood or exhilaration, and refrains from the cultivation of fine arts such as music and poetry, by which somebody may be wholly taken up (*Khizâna* 7 and 4). Further, a *hakîm* shares in the prophetic knowledge of the 'tablets' (specimens of the 'Guarded Tablet' on which the decrees of God with reference to mankind are recorded) (*Khizâna* 3).

A *hakîm* differs from a prophet in at least three respects:

1. He does not approach the Truly Good One by means of the *qurb al-farâ'id* (proximity to God reached by the punctual fulfillment of religious duties), but by means of the *qurb al-wujûd* (*Khizâna* 8).
2. A prophet is led by *wahy*, a *hakîm* relies on his *dhawq* (intuitive anticipation) (*Tafh.* II, 121).
3. Because the prophet has to concentrate on the revelatory processes as such, he has hardly any time left for the elaboration of the information received by revelation, such as the substantiation of ethical rules and the like. This now is a task reserved for his heir, the *hakîm*, in his capacity of materialized intellect (*Khizâna* 8).

Is it surprising that Shâh Walî Allâh, being called through divine visions to act as a renewer, considered himself a typical representative of the *hakîm*-family? Speaking of himself he tells us: 'Eleven ages after the *hijra* there was a man, gifted with inner light (*zakî*), who began to apply himself to the *qurb al-wujûd*. Thus he

became an *imâm* (leader) of the pious and an *`isâm* (loop-shaped handle) for the *hakîms*, and he prayed to God that He might make him the seal (i.e. the last) of the infallible *hakîms*' (*Khizâna* 4).

C. Walî (Protégé of God)

The task of the *walîs* is the establishment and propagation of the esoteric elements of religion, of which *ihsân* (sincere worship of God) forms the nucleus. Characteristic of the *walîs* are miracles wrought by means of the God-given talents of inner revelation (*kashf*), thought-reading (*ishrâf*), spiritual power over one's novices (*tasarruf*), and answer to prayer (*H. I*).

They are inferior in rank to the *hakîm*. Unlike the latter the *walîs* cannot give effective guidance to the community as a

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whole, because they are not in the possession of both theoretical and practical knowledge, a combination essential to leadership. They are either of the type *Homo theoreticus* as, for instance, Ibn al-`Arabî, or of the type of *Homo practicus* like the founders of *sûfî* orders, but never both in one (*Khizâna* 7).

A *walî* is also secondary to a prophet, for the prophet's range of effectiveness and utility is much wider than that of the *walî*; many more people experience the wholesome influence of prophets (*Kalimât- tayyibât* 164 ff.). The Delhi divine bases a second argument in favour of the superiority of prophethood over saintliness on the assumption that the prophets are nearer to God than the saints (*Tafh. II*, 151 & 20).

Other distinctions observable between prophets and *walîs* are:

- a) The prophets know God as the Necessary Cause (so that they have an insight in God's predestination and planning) and Purpose (because of which they are acquainted with God's will, commands and prohibitions). They are wholly merged into His will. The *walîs* know God only as the Necessary Cause and they are completely absorbed in this divine aspect.
- b) The prophets obtain a knowledge of the statutes of the *sharî'a* at the moment they are formulated, whereas the divine institutes given to *walîs* already received their fixed form long ago.
- c) It is proper for prophets to marry, since their standing places them under obligation to have a social and a family life. For *walîs* it is more suitable to remain celibate, as they are dyed with the dye of sanctity and sublimity (*Khizâna* 7). The structure of their *`isma*, therefore, is different from that of the prophets¹. Because of their ascetic attitude towards life they are by nature men of devotion, continence, and insensitive to sexual attractions. It does not make any difference to them whether they are confronted by a charming lady or a wall. Prophets, however, do know sexual passions. Consequently, *`isma* has to be spread over them as a protecting garment (*Tafh. I*, 260 f.). An illustration of this is the case of Joseph, in whom a flame of love for the wife of Potiphar leapt up. Then a *burhân* (manifestation of truth) was sent by God to protect him (*Ta'wîl* 34 f.). By the way, it is interesting to note that Shâh Walî Allâh holds the prophetic *`isma* to be of a more sublime nature than that of the *walîs*. He seems to feel more sympathy for really human people than for 'unnatural' renouncers of the world.
- d) Both prophets and *walîs* are ordered to show the right way and to give guidance, but the command the prophets receive refers to universal purposes, whereas the guidance of *walîs* pertains to individual cases and particular situations (*Tafh. II*, 212).
- e) Revelations to a prophet are of an ethereal nature, whereas revelations to a *walî* are constituted of an earthly structure. Unlike what happens to a *walî*, the inner revelation of a prophet is realized by a tunnel which opens into the Reality of God. So the prophet is a beloved of God upon whom the inner revelation is poured out. Since the *walî* is a man with a strong mental acuteness and an intense purity, the inner revelation is reflected by him. A prophet has *du`a* (prayer of request) at his

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disposal, and not *himma* (inner drive) which is a prerogative of a *walî*. For that reason a prophet has at his command the *qurb al-farâ'id* (attaining proximity to God by complying with the ordinances of God), and a *walî* a special aptitude for *qurb al-nawâfil* (attaining proximity to God by supererogative works) (*Tafh. II*, 46).

Through a *qurb al-nawâfil* man is enabled to see himself in the mirror of God, so that he is coloured with the colour of the mirror, i.e. the majesty of the Self-existent. Effects of this *qurb* are pride, glory and dominion. In the event of *qurb al-farâ'id*, however, man is put in a dependent position: he cannot know the very Essence of God of his own accord and has to bide the moment that God will manifest Himself in his *`ayn thâbita*.

Characteristics of this *qurb* are feelings of impotence, humble submission and a waiting attitude (*Khizâna* 4).

f) A *walî* is the recipient of *ilhâm* (inspiration), a prophet of *wahy* (revelation). The difference between *ilhâm* and *wahy* is that in statements produced by an *ilhâm*, in contrast to what is revealed by a *wahy*, heresies might be included. *Wahy*, however, is all truth without any trace of falsehood (*Khizâna* 2) and provides sure knowledge (*Sat. 17*). It is *ilhâm* if somebody's disposition is prepared for God's teaching in a special way; if

the Universal Divine Planning prepares the emanation without such a preparation, it is *wahy*. All that God conveys through *wahy* forms part of religious rules, and all that with which He inspires *walīs* pertains to ways of obtaining access to God (*Tafh.* II, 28).

g) When on his journey to God a mystic leaves the first stage of *walī*-hood², two possibilities are open to him: either to follow the way of the inheritors of prophethood, or to take the path of full-fledged *walī*-hood. In the first instance he is fascinated by the *tajallī a`zam*, by means of which he rises to the *dhât baht* (Pure Essence of God), in the second case his spiritual eye is fixed on the *nafs kulliyya*, and from there he ascends towards the *dhât baht* (*A.Q.* 122 ff.).

Various types of *walī* can be distinguished according to their psychic disposition. These are those:

a) whose *nasamas* are more prominent than their *nufûs nâtiqa*; and through their *nasamas* they go off into trance (*jadhb*). Representatives of this category are Najm al-Dîn Kubrâ (d. 1220), founder of the Kubrawî order, and Ahrâr (d. 1490), a well-known Naqshbandî of Central Asia;

b) whose *nufûs nâtiqa* are more prominent than their *nasamas*; through their *nufûs nâtiqa* they are thrown into trance. Characteristic of them is that they are more amply endowed with spiritual knowledge (*`ilm*) than with spiritual intoxication (*hâl*). To them is to be reckoned the celebrated sûfî al-Junayd (d. 910);

c) of whom the *`ayn thâbita* preponderates. To this class of saints belongs Ibn al-`Arabî, the great mystic philosopher (d. 1240) (*Tafh.* II, 131). His range of spiritual knowledge was wider than that of any other *walī*. He affirmed the existence of esoteric prophethood and the termination of legislative prophethood after the death of the Seal of prophets (*Tafh.* II, 33 97).

f.).

Another classification of *walīs* can be made, if the source of their impulses is taken into consideration. Then two levels can be distinguished:

a) a higher level. Here an inner urge is evoked by an inspiration from God when He wishes to promote human welfare. At that time the *walī*, now being of a prophetic status, is equipped with divine laws (*nâmûs*) by the intermediary of the *mala a`lâ*;

b) a lower level. This refers to *walīs* who receive stimuli from the *mala sâfil* ('Low Council'). Their main function is to become a refuge and a point of union for the people (*Fuyûd*, 43th Vision).

D. Caliph

Shâh Walī Allâh characterizes him as follows: 'Typical of the caliph is that he is of all men acquainted best with running an empire, waging a holy war and administrating the *sharī`a*' (*B.B.* 174). 'He sees that justice is carried out on earth and injustice is removed from it as far as possible. This can be done because the light of God envelops him... When people join him, a fire of love for them is lighted in his heart. No resort has to be made to political or military force (*B.B.* 172 f.).

Three categories of caliphs can be distinguished: the *khâss* (élite); the *`âmm* (ordinary type) and the *jâbir* (despotic ones). The four rightly guided caliphs typify the first class of the illustrious representants of the caliphate. They were among the direct heirs of Mohammed and had to fulfil a very special mission. When the Prophet died, some of the activities pertaining to his prophethood were not yet accomplished. The two main unfinished tasks were:

a) compilation of the Qur'ân from texts written on straight palm leaves and thin whitish stones;

b) phrasing rules given by the Prophet which had not yet been divulged to the people (*Izâla* I, 262).

'Consequently, the divine Will had directed that their completion was to be brought about by the agency of some individuals from his community... An allusion to this is found in God's Word, stating: 'God has promised those of you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will surely make you successors' (*Qur'ân* XXIV, 55), and in His Word 'like the seed that has put forth its sprouts' (*Qur'ân* XLVIII, 29).

Similarly, Moses appointed Joshua caliph and it is told how divine promises³ were fulfilled by the latter' (*Izâla* II, 3). In elucidation of this point the author makes use of the simile: 'The caliph of a prophet is like a flute in the mouth of a flute-player' (*Tafh.* I, 243), and says: 'Just as the production of a high tone and the fine quality of a melody by the flute-player who raises the flute to his mouth, are credited to the player (and not to the flute), so the work done by the caliphs as successors to the Prophet, who was called back by God before his mission was completed, is in fact credited to the Prophet; the caliphs themselves are considered as mere organs of the Prophet' (*Izâla* I, 9f.). Hence 'the period of the caliphate (of the 'rightly guided' caliphs) constitutes the prophetic era. (The

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only difference between the two epochs is that) in the days when Mohammed was still alive, the Prophet gave lucid verbal explanations, whereas in the days of the caliphs he sat still and made signals with his hand

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or head (as he wont to do when appearing to his followers in dreams; cf. *Tafh.* II,248)' (*Izâla* I,25).

Further, the Delhi divine draws a distinction between public and spiritual caliphate. Public caliphate undertakes the *jihâd*, administers the law, looks after the preservation of the restrictive statutes of God (*hudûd*), collects and distributes tithes and land tax among the rightful claimants (*Tafh.* I,13). Spiritual caliphate, on the other hand, gives instruction in the *sharî'a*, Qur'ân and *sunna*, enjoins what is known to be good and censures what is evil, and explains how spiritual perfection can be attained (*Fuyûd*, 36th Vision). And when the capacities of a public and spiritual caliphate are united in one person, we are confronted with an exponent of the élite caliphate (*Izâla* I,260).

'The fruits of perfect intellectual power in a prophet include *wahy*, and the fruits of the same capacity in a caliph include reliable inductive divination (*firâsa*), the status of a *muhaddath* (one who is inspired with true visions), and of a *siddîq* (zealous persevering believer)⁴. The fruits of perfect practical power in a prophet include purity of character and finding the right way; and to the fruits of the same capacity in a caliph belong integrity, continence and being kept free from sin... The excelling disposition of a prophet, if both powers are united in him, results in miracles and extraordinary experiences as, for instance, the *mî'râj* (ascension); and to a caliph of a similar disposition belong stages of progressive spiritual development, lofty experiences, miracles, answer to prayer and the effect of his sermons upon men' (*Izâla* I,263 f.).

Embarking upon the intricate question whether the era of the élite caliphate ends with `Uthmân or also includes the tumultuous reign of `Alî, Shâh Walî Allâh quotes Mohammed's statement, related by his Companion Abû Bakr (d. 671): 'After me there will be a caliphate of thirty years'. So `Alî is to be included, for if the true caliphate had ended with the death of `Uthmân, its duration comes up to twenty-five years only (*Izâla* I,142). As for the order of merit with regard to the four 'rightly guided' caliphs, the Delhi scholar accepts the view of the great majority of Muslims: 'The most eminent personality of the *umma* is Abû Bakr, then comes `Umar, followed by `Uthmân and `Alî' (*Khizâna* 10 and *Tafh.* I,148). The main criterion to determine their order of merit is the amount of utility each of them had for the *umma*. Just as the superiority of a prophet over a saint is founded on the fact that the former has more ways of serving the community than the latter, and more individuals are benefited by a prophet than by a saint, so the superiority of Abû Bakr and `Umar over `Alî rests *inter alia* on their giving wider currency to the revealed Law and achieving a greater multiplicity of military victories for the sake of Islam (*Kalimât-i tayyibât* 166).

Shâh Walî Allâh typifies their personal relation to the Prophet

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as follows: Abû Bakr followed the example of the Messenger of God in the cycle of *qurb al-kamâl* (proximity to God reached by 'perfection'). This attitude is characterized by the concentration of one's being upon God (*tawajjuh*) and is comparable to *yâd-dâsh*t (constant concentration on the reality of God) as practised by saints. `Umar followed the example of the Prophet in gaining proximity to God by the fulfilment of the prescribed religious duties<sup>5</sup>, while `Uthmân imitated the Prophet by achieving *qurb al-wujûd* (proximity attained during an overflow of God's pure Being), being enabled to do this by an ideal natural constitution. `Alî also became firmly rooted in the *qurb al-wujûd*. He obtained wisdom in legal matters and gained ascent to the World of Sovereignty. So he was charged with expounding the sacred Law and archetypal religion (*dîn*) revealed to the Prophet (*Tafh.* I,39 f. and II,73), and 'he has deflected the fire of prophethood, of which the flames shot up in the opposite direction so that they vanished into *butûn* (esoteric meanings)⁶' (*Tafh.* I,76).

In his definition of what is to be understood by 'ordinary caliphate' Shâh Walî Allâh enumerates most of the principal constituents of the élite caliphate: 'It is general leadership in lieu of the Prophet, directing its attention to the enforcement of religion by means of a revival of the religious disciplines, through undertaking the Holy War and matters connected with it (such as the training of armies, fixing the salaries, assignment of spoils to its participants), by means of taking charge of judicature, and so on' (*Izâla* I,2). Yet, there is one basic distinction between the two categories of caliphate which has far-reaching consequences. Instead of being appointed by a designation of the Prophet, an ordinary caliph is elected by the people, with the unpleasant risk that a caliph is selected with all kinds of human fallibilities and may even lapse into tyranny. One of the most probable weaknesses of an ordinary caliph is that he might be satisfied with having founded his knowledge and sense of justice on his private opinion only (*Izâla* I,10).

In the course of time the two main corrupting elements in the process of the caliphate's deterioration appeared to be:

1. the increase of property which excited the spirit of greed;
2. the growing preference to follow solely one's own discretion without any desire to consult other people (*Izâla* I,144).

Although the Umayyads could not always exercise a stable rule and their caliphs, without any exception, did not come up to the standard of their position, they nevertheless proved to be better qualified as rulers than

the `Abbâsids whose methods were marked by despotism and arrogance. The latter modelled their conduct upon the customs of Persian kings and Byzantine emperors (*H.B.* II,212). The condition of the caliphate worsened still more during the reign of the non-Arab monarchs who succeeded the Arabs. Their government turned out to be similar to that of the Zoroastrians (*Izâla* II,157).

Although in his capacity of serving as a model to the Muslim
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community a caliph has, in principle, to comply with the most rigid standards, this does not mean that, if he happens not to possess all the qualities needed for a proper execution of office, one should immediately raise opposition to him. For the disposition of a caliph most likely involves strife and affliction of which the disadvantages might be greater than the benefits to be hoped for. However, as soon as he is guilty of *kufir* (infidelity) by rejecting one of the basic institutions of religion, it is not only allowed but it is even imperative to fight him (*H.B.* II,150).

E. Muhaddath (man who is inspired)

The Delhi divine gives the following explanation: 'A *muhaddath* can be inspired in two ways: sometimes he receives suggestions from the universal soul, and impulses of the full-fledged self-consciousness (*anâniyya-i kubrâ*) percolate upon him. At other times he receives suggestions from the holy spirit (*rûh-i quds*), and impulses of the *mala a`lâ* descend into him by a system of the mesaraic veins. Consequently, he impersonates the felicitous integration of two life-styles, that of full-fledged saint-hood and of the inheritors of prophethood (*A.Q.* 37). Thus *muhaddath* is an epitheton that can be applied to a prophet, an intimate Companion of Mohammed, and a particularly privileged believer. As for the first category, we are referred to Jonah: 'Jonah was originally a *muhaddath* - and not a *mukallam* (spoken to by God through *wahys*) - prophet. Isaiah sent him to the people of Nineveh. At that time he was not yet independent of his lower self (*nafs*), but God wanted to clothe him with the garb of rectitude, so that he would belong to the righteous messengers (*Qur'ân* LXVIII,50). During the resistance of his *umma* (sc. the Ninevites), the desire rose in him to pray for their perdition... However, their repentance was accepted (by God). Therefore he was in great confusion... When he recognized that his orientation was wrong, he was afflicted with all sorts of trial, till in the end... he was dressed with the garb of rectitude and being no longer dependent on his lower self (sc. his personal sympathies and antipathies) he was sent to his people' (*Tafh.* II,119). From that moment he received *wahys* (*Tafh.* II,123).

`Umar is, as we know from the traditions (see Bu. *Anbiyâ*' 54; Mu. *Fadâ'il al-sahâba* 23), the very prototype of a *muhaddath*. 'When somebody in the *umma*', so we read in one of Shâh Walî Allâh's arguments, 'in his very nature resembles the prophets to a similar extent as an intelligent student resembles a practised teacher, he is a *muhaddath* if the resemblance refers to intellectual capacities. He is a man whose mind dashes towards the mines of knowledge in the World of Sovereignty as fast as he can, in order to derive from it all kinds of knowledge God has prepared to serve as a *sharî'a* for the Prophet and as a means to the reform of mankind. An allusion to this is made in the tradition which relates that the Prophet saw in a dream how - after having quenched his thirst - he gave the milk (symbol of knowledge) to
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`Umar' (*H.B.* II,93).

The third group of people who can be qualified as *muhaddath* are believers endowed with the gift of *tafhîm* (interior revelation) (*Tafh.* II,121). Their stages of progressive spiritual development, comprising `isma (purity of character), wisdom, gift of speech, missionary zeal, fighting against evil, and professing the right articles of belief are comparable to those of prophets. The Messenger of God once said: 'The vision of a believer is a forty-sixth part of prophethood' (Bu. *Ta`bîr al-ru'yâ* 4) (*Khizâna* 5).

F. Fard (singular man)

Among *sûfis* *fard* denotes the fourth degree in the hierarchy of the saints. Only three hundred persons, being the total number of the participants in the battle of Badr, would be entitled to it. According to the Delhi scholar their most conspicuous characteristic is their ability to establish particular connections with cosmic elements and entities.

People in general, he tells us, appear to possess - in spite of their common share in humanity - remarkably distinctive properties owing to the predominance of a very special feature in their constitution. Thus we find persons in whom the 'plant-form' is predominant. Hence they are known for their exceptional bio-physical powers. Other people are endowed with a predominantly animal form so that their outstanding traits are sensuality, violent motion, passion, libidinousness and gluttony. People in whom the human form prevails are

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blessed with virtues like courage, magnanimity, wisdom and eloquence. Persons equipped with a strong personality are marked by extraordinary mystic experiences, while God sends illuminations in the *a`yân thâbita* of those in whom the *`ayn*-form predominates.

Yet, *fards* do not belong to any of the categories mentioned. Their peculiarity rests on something else. They are distinguished by either:

a) a predominating 'water form', because of which they resemble a talented physicist who strives to uncover the basic elements of existing things; or b) a predominating primordial matter-form composed of a substance which emerges first from the *Rahmût*, Realm of Mercy. Such a man bears a close likeness to a mathematician; or c) a predominating *Rahmût*-form. This is the highest class of *fard*. Such a person is able to penetrate into the source of things, and he is most akin to a metaphysician.

In short, it is typical of a *fard* that without any tool he knows the things as they are in their very essence, for the knowledge he possesses dripped directly from the *Rahmût*, primordial matter or water (*Tafh.* II, 195 f.).

When knowledge like this seeps down, a kind of light is manifested in one's soul, although hardly any effect is observed by the world outside (*Tafh.* I, 230). In human society *fards* remain unnoticed. Still God grants them knowledge and theophanies with which He does not make other people acquainted (*Tafh.* I, 190). To 102.

this end *raqîqas* (fine links) standing in an opposite correlation to the sun, moon, planets and other cosmic forces are deposited in them. Each of these *raqîqas* has a peculiar quality and activity. Thus, for instance, literary talents are developed through the *raqîqa* which is in communication with Mercury. A sense of the beauty with which God has endowed things is acquired through the *raqîqa* correlated with Venus, etc. Consequently, when a *fard* notices something that might be beneficial to him or to somebody else, one of his *raqîqas* expands towards the cosmic force that may serve the purpose. If, for instance, he wants to inform people of an occurrence in the near future, the *raqîqa* which has a connection with the moon expands (*Fuyûd*, 45th Vision).

One of the exclusive properties of a *fard* is that during his earthly lifetime he can take off his earthly form. Then he is in a condition to pass from the land of the living into the realm of the dead, the world of Resurrection, Paradise and 'Holy Enclosure'. After that he reaches God and beholds His face. When later on he dies everybody's death, he will pass through phases he already knows from past experience. Another of his characteristics is that on the approach of death he longs for a solitude and wants to keep away from blemish. The duration of his life lies between fifty and sixty years (*Tafh.* II, 196 f.).

After his death a *fard* is again enabled to produce miraculous effects. For, when he enters the world of the grave, a yearning for the Universal Nature arises in him, in consequence of which he becomes at times a means for the Universal Divine Planning. Accordingly, somewhere on earth blessings are manifested (*Fuyûd*, 45th Vision).

G. *Mujaddid* (renewer)

In connection with the prophetic saying: 'On the eve of every century God will send to my community a man who will renovate its *dîn* (archetypal religion)' (*Sunan Abî Dâ'ûd* II, 518), Shâh Walî Allâh states: 'Every servant of God is definitely in need of a *mujaddid* to purify his religion from undue assumptions of sectarians. Hence the latter is somebody whom God grants a share of knowledge concerning Qur'ân and Hadîth so that he is able to explain the secret tenets of the *milla* (institutionalized religion). Next, he will be clothed with the garb of inner peace (*sakîna*). So he becomes occupied with determining what is to be considered forbidden, imperative, reprehensible, desirable and permitted, and with pruning the *sharî'a* from spurious traditions and deductions by analogy. Equally, he guards against an over-rigid observance of the Law as well as against neglect of it. Then God will make people anxious to acquire knowledge from him' (*Tafh.* I, 29, 40 and II, 133).

Shâh Walî Allâh discerns an interrelation between the offices of a *mujaddid* and a *wasî* (legal guardian). Both of them are heirs of Mohammed. One of the tasks of a *mujaddid* is to discuss legislative matters in the light of the sublime normative custom of the early community without the application of a reasoning by analogy, while a *wasî* has the duty to discuss the hidden

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significance of the injunctions of the *sharî'a*. Similarly, the methods used by them both have to be adapted to the different circumstances. If eloquence is highly valued by the people, the elucidations should be offered in a very eloquent manner. If the language of demonstrative proof appears much in favour of the people, the explanations should excel in sound reasoning (*Tafh.* I, 78 & 82). If one wishes to fix the date of the appearance of a *mujaddid* one should, so the Delhi scholar argues, take a space of time of roughly - but not exactly - a hundred years; and one should count from the death of the Messenger of God (*Tafh.* I, 40). 'The

view that one has to count from the date of the *hijra*... is unfounded' (*Tafh.* II,114). In this way Shâh Walî Allâh tries to corroborate his claim of being himself appointed as a *mujaddid* of the 12th century, since the year of his birth is 1114 A.H. A hardly covert allusion to his divine election is made in the following passage: 'We want to entrust you with important information, to wit that God has predestined grace for these days. He wants to pour forth important kinds of knowledge in our time... Thus, at the very moment the lights of prophets and saints were united in the 'Holy Enclosure'..., it has the necessary result that the Universal Soul descended into a soul endowed with inner light who... would reform the world as a whole' (*Tafh.* I,100). All veils of mystery are lifted on p. 40 of *Tafh.* I, where we are told that at a certain stage of his spiritual journey God clothed him with the robe of *mujaddid*-hood: 'Consequently, I became acquainted with the methods to reconcile conflicting opinions. And I was notified that we have to do with 'distortion' (*tahrîf*) if people exercise individual opinion in the *sharî'a* as such, but that it is a blessing when a *qâdî* gives judgment according to his own discretion'.

H. `Ulamâ'

In Shâh Walî Allâh's 21th Vision, recorded in the *Fuyûd al-Haramayn*, we read: 'I asked the Prophet's permission to refute criticism leveled against some *sûfis* by `ulamâ' of Mecca and Medina, but I did not obtain it. I found that the `ulamâ', who act according to their principles, somehow occupy themselves with the refinement of hearts and the spread of true knowledge and faith are closer to Him, more respected and beloved by Him than the *sûfis*, although the latter are people who practise *fanâ'* and *baqâ'*, go into trances (*jadhb*), and... may reach lofty stages such as the gate of consciousness of one's unity with God (*tawhîd*). In explanation of this divine preference, the Delhi scholar argues, is the fact that there are two paths leading to Eternal Life:

1. the path which has been conveyed to mankind by the Prophet. It is supplied by various means. Through ritual acts of devotion the limbs are put into a correct state, while psychic faculties are sublimated by means of *dhikr*, purification of the heart and love of God and the Prophet. Further, by the distribution of true knowledge, by enjoining what is known to be good and censuring what is evil and by advocating the public interest people are set right...

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2. the path which establishes a direct link between God and His worshipper, in such a way that, wherever he may have been born, he will find it; and with whatever he may be blessed, he will be blessed with it without any medium. For him who travels on it, the only concern is to be conscious of the reality of his ego and, in consequence of this, to become conscious of the Divine. On the way there are experiences like *fanâ'* and *baqâ'*, *jadhb* and *tawhîd*. As for the second path: we are of the opinion that the Prophet had no high regard for it and did not like it very much, for he himself advised for the following of the first path'.

Though in this way Shâh Walî Allâh was corrected in his original predilection for fellow-*sûfis* and was told by the Prophet that God does have a preference for `ulamâ', he still deemed fit to regard the latter with a critical eye. One should guard oneself against associates of those who - instead of confining themselves to the study of the Qur'ân and prophetic *sunna* - concern themselves with Greek lore, morphology, syntax and semantics, or historical investigation. They are, actually `ulamâ' longing for the splendour of the present life; it has nothing to do with faith (*Tafh.* I, 214 & 37).

I. Philosophers

More than once Shâh Walî Allâh raises his warning voice against the Greek philosophers who influenced and shaped Muslim thought to a considerable extent: 'Beware of caring for people who call themselves *falâsifa*. God has made them to go astray, in spite of their knowledge, and ensnared them in their intellectualism, so that they cannot find a way to escape from it. If you want to go to the heart of things and determine hidden meanings, their knowledge will be of no use to you. True knowledge is gained from the spring of the *sharî'a* together with pious deeds and seeking proximity to God' (*Khizâna* 10). Similarly, contemporary philosophers are deviating from the right path: 'Although the metaphysians (*ma`qûliyyân*) of our time may comprehend abstruse points, they are really far from divine grace... With respect to them one can state that by applying themselves to novel sciences they remain excluded from the legacy of prophets'8 (*Qur'at* 161). These people are afflicted with 'all sorts of doubt and confusion, making the Day of Resurrection 'a thing forgotten and ought of sight' (*Qur'ân* XIX,22) (F.K. 40). 'They are worse than dogs, for a dog does not sniff at an old bone. These worthless people sniff and lick at bones that are two thousand years old. The cause of their erring is that our intellect (`*aqî*) (on which solely rely) is deficient... It badly needs the additional help of the *dhawq* (intuitive anticipation). The `*aqî* is merely an apparatus of analysis and abstraction; the *dhawq* perceives the unity behind the multiplicity' (A.Q. 142 ff.).

Another heresy is their assumption of a hierarchy of separate and independent intelligences⁹, each lower

one emanating from a higher one. Their postulate of ten intelligences, being a kind of creative and regulating powers that govern the universe, cannot be 105.

right because 'the stage of the *`aql* (in which God at first ordered the existence of the universe) is prior to the universe in its present shape (*nafs kullīyya*). The *`aql*-stage is the level of *thubūt* (transcendental determination), and the *nafs kullīyya* represents the level of *wujūd* (actualization) (*Tafh.* I, 192).

Another fallacy of the philosophers is to maintain that the divine Will is identical to the divine Essence. In this way they infer that an uncreated attribute can take created forms (which is an obvious incoherence). This error can be avoided by postulating the existence of an intermediary, to wit the *tajallī a`zam* which implies that the divine Essence is in the possession of an *irāda mutajaddida* (i.e. a Will causing continuous processes of renovation in the universe) (*Sat.* 11).

When holding that carrying out or refraining from an act merely rests with a heavenly *maslaha* (consideration of expediency), the philosopher's view of the free will, so Shāh Walī Allāh claims, turns out to be too narrow: They observe only a part, whereas various other aspects remain hidden from them. They are veiled from witnessing the zone called 'Holy Enclosure' (*ḥazīra al-quds*) where consensus of the *mala a`lā* concerning the doing or omitting of facts are achieved. Those consensus are based, among other things, on a valuation of deeds performed by men on earth... A clear argument against them is that when, for instance, one of us stretches out his hand for a pen, he is doing that purposely and intentionally..., although in principle everything happens according to a heavenly *maslaha*... Two things are equally true:

a) a free will results from causes; it cannot fail to show up its cause...

b) a free will is at liberty to delight in considering the possibilities open to it without being concerned about 'what is beyond that' (*H.B.* I, 67 f.).

J. Mutakallimūn (scholars in the field of scholastic theology)

Shāh Walī Allāh's opinion on the *mutakallimūn* appears to be nearly as unfavourable as in the case of the philosophers: 'The heresies suggested by the *mutakallimūn* are without any foundation and should not be adopted from them' (*Khizāna* 10). Instead of being content with simply noting the 'final' manifestations and operations of the divine Attributes as they are observed in the phenomenal world, the *mutakallimūn* also try to view them from their base-side as they subsist in the Essence of God by speaking in metaphors (*B.B.* 103).

In particular, the Mu`tazilites are denounced. They are qualified as 'heterodox' (*H.B.* I, 135) and 'aftergrowths' (like weeds on cultivated land), 'for ultimately this group holds many doctrines which would be unacceptable to the first generation of the Muslim community' (*Kalimāt-i tayyibāt* 174 and *Qurrat* 314); this is contrary to the teachings of al-Ash`arī which 'resemble those of the Companions of the Prophet' (*Khizāna* 10). True, al-Ash`arī himself belongs to the *mutakallimūn*, but among the orthodox he enjoys a much better reputation than the Mu`tazilites, and the

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Delhi divine strives hard to defend him. He often establishes a surprising agreement between his own theories and those of al-Ash`arī: Is not what the latter says about the 'capacity is with the act' 10 exactly the same as what Shāh Walī Allāh himself has demonstrated when arguing that 'the contingencies rely on God to the same extent as light relies on the sun?' (*Khizāna* 10). And indeed, if the Delhi scholar endorses al-Ash`arī's tenet of the *kalām nafsī* (internal speech inhering in God's Essence of which the revealed Qur`ān is an expression) (*Khizāna* 10), he contradicts the Mu`tazilites who reject this theory. Further, contrary to the Mu`tazilites he affirms that prayers for the dead and alms given on their behalf are effective (*H.B.* II, 32), holds that God forgives a believer even if he died without repenting his grave sins (*Husn al-`aqlida* 13) and that saints can work miracles (*Khizāna* 7). Yet, the matter is not as simple as Shāh Walī Allāh wants us to believe. Thus, for instance, problems already arise as soon as he has to deal with the thorny question of how to determine the criteria for good and bad: 'When al-Ash`arī says', so we read, 'that the goodness and badness of human deeds is fixed by the *sharī`a*, he means that this is in accordance with actual practice'. So far, it seems, Shāh Walī Allāh agrees with al-Ash`arī's point of view, but then he continues: 'Conclusive as to what is good or bad is, to my mind, the fact from the beginning of times something has been good or bad and that human reason can make this clear and prove it, and that when the *sharī`a* came down, good and bad could be verified for a second time' (*Khizāna* 10). Here al-Ash`arī's opinion is complemented by the Mu`tazilite standpoint.

Shāh Walī Allāh's professed Ash`arite stand, however, becomes the more disputable at the moment we discover in his writings at least as many views agreeing with the Mu`tazilites as with the Ash`arites.

Instances of conformity with Mu`tazilite teachings are also:

a) Once, in a discussion of the *visio beatifica* (the question whether God will be seen with the eyes of the

faithful in Paradise) he explicitly declares that the Mu` tazilite conception of it is right (*Tafh.* I,145).

b) When Shâh Walî Allâh states that only God and those firmly rooted in knowledge can explain matters which are ambiguous (*mutashâbih*)(*H.B.* I,110),it means that like the Mu` tazilites he places in *Qur`ân* III,7 the pause after `ilm, and not after Allâh, and accordingly reads: 'None knows the interpretation of what is *mutashâbih* save only God and those firmly rooted in knowledge'. 'A distinctive trait of them is that their knowledge seems to have descended from God directly into their very hearts and emerge as fire struck with a flint' (*B.B.* 158). So they are in possession of `ilm *ladunî* (knowledge imparted directly from God)(*Husn al-`aqida* 27 f.).

c) In his *Hujjat al-nubuwwa* 145 f. the Mu` tazilite al-Jâhiz (d. 869) observes: 'The principal characteristic of the Arab people was rhetorics; thus the inimitable Qur`ân became the miracle of Mohammed'. The Delhi savant uses exactly the same argument:

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'People in the time of the Prophet were busy with poetry and rhetorics. They owed their renown to them... Accordingly, God sent down the miracle of the Qur`ân... Thus He proved to be the supreme authority in the dispute by checkmating them on their own ground' (*Tafh.* I,82).

d) The Delhi divine follows in the track of the Mu` tazilite Abu'l-Hudhayl (d. 840), when he holds that God's Attributes are identical with Himself (*Tafh.* II,18), and not an addition to the divine Essence.

e) The emphasis Shâh Walî Allâh lays on man's being placed in the state of accountability (*taklîf*). The unjust, mentioned in *Qur`ân* XXXIII,72 (the famous passage stating that man accepted the 'trust' which heavens, earth and mountains refused to carry), is he who does not practise justice though he is capable of doing so. Unlike an angel who is perfect *in esse*, man is perfect *in posse* (*H.B.* I,19 f.).

f) The superiority of angels over prophets (*Khizâna* 3) as is the opinion of the majority of the Mu` tazilites (see A.J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, London 1965, 201).

g) The reluctance to apply *naskh* to Qur`ân verses is in agreement with the Mu` tazilite way of thinking, as for them *naskh* may introduce a principle of mutability in the divine Will (L. Gardet, *Dieu et la destinée de l'homme*, Paris 1967, 217).

{1} A heterodox view, since Sunnîs hold `isma to be exclusive of prophets.

According to Shâh Walî Allâh the concept `isma implies that besides prophets other people may also be disposed by nature to truthfulness, continence, self-restraint and performing good deeds (*Tafh.* II,21).

{2} At this stage the heart of a mystic experiences expansion of the heart free from any contraction, elective affinity without disturbance, and ecstasy without losing consciousness. His intellect becomes acute and receives superior knowledge of the Unseen through clairvoyance, illumination, voices from heaven, and the like. And his soul gains tranquillity (*H.* XIX).

{3} Islam's victory over Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians is to be reckoned among the divine promises realized by the first three caliphs. It is announced in *Qur`ân* IX,33: 'that He may make the religion of truth victorious over every other religion' (*Izâla* I,14).

{4} 'A *siddîq* is... as kindred to a prophet as sulphur is to fire' (*H.B.* II,93). He perceives the very root of things by merely hearing the words of the prophet. Consequently, acknowledging the truth of the prophet unreservedly and without any desire for a confirming miracle, is a requisite of this status. The very prototype of a *siddîq*, a faithful witness of the truth, is Abû Bakr who used to hear the sough of Gabriel when a revelation descended upon the Prophet (*Izâla* II,3 and *H.B.* II,93). Because of this special spiritual affinity to Mohammed, Abû Bakr is to be regarded as the most

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eminent caliph and even superior to `Umar.

{5} In the eyes of Shâh Walî Allâh `Umar was a kind of super *imâm*, considering the *fiqh* of the *imâms* of the four schools to be only a commentary on what was already established by the *ijtihâd* of this caliph (*Izâla* II,85). In contradistinction to `Alî, `Umar seems to have a keener feeling for the confessional import of religion than for its spiritual aspects, as the author infers from comments he made during the *hajj*. Once `Umar declared while he kissed the Black Stone: 'I know very well that you are but a stone that neither helps nor hurts. If I had not seen the Prophet kiss you, I would certainly never kiss you' (*Mu. Hajj* 248). Thereupon `Alî observed: 'There is a benefit in kissing it'. The Delhi scholar explains this anecdote as follows: The difference of opinion has to do with the different functions `Umar and `Alî had to perform. `Umar was responsible for keeping religious practice free from corruption. So his remarks were made in refutation of idolators. The special task with which `Alî was entrusted was to uncover hidden symbolism. Accordingly, he perceived that an imperishable shape had been effused upon that stone, since it

was said originally to have descended from Paradise (*Tafh.* II,171 f.).

{6} To give one example: 'The saying 'There is no god besides Allâh' has many *butûn*. First, the repulse of plain idolatry; secondly, the repulse of secret idolatry; thirdly, the removal of impediments which bar the way to obtaining knowledge of God' (*H.B.* II,72).

{7} Held to be the most fundamental element in the Universe. Up till the present day, there are Arabs who distinguish types of human beings according to the one or the other predominating element (See H. Granqvist, *Birth and Childhood among the Arabs*, Helsingfors 1947, 173).

{8} Exceeding the bounds of prophetic lore, however, is an aberration of which Shâh Walî Allâh himself cannot always steer clear. In this respect the way in which he apologizes for having discussed two possibilities of the origin of the world is significant: 'Do not protest too loudly against the argument we just made. Leading Sunnites also treated difficult subjects which were never broached either by the Companions or the Followers. Still they remained good Sunnites. Similarly, with our intuitive anticipation we enter on intricate questions which these leaders have never taken up or even summarily indicated, as those questions were not yet of topical interest' (*Khizâna* 2).

{9} These *`uqûl* are deemed to be the originators of the movement of the nine spheres around the earth. They bring God's management of the universe into operation. The main objection Shâh Walî Allâh has to the *`uqûl* of the *falâsifa* is the assumption that they are independent substances that act on the universe. It is Rahmân, however, who is the actor; and the *`uqûl* are to be regarded as aspects and modes of the Ultimate Reality. When they rise to the world of divine Essence (*Lâhût*), they vanish into It; and when they descend to what is close to multiplicity, you find them actualized as Names (*Tafh.* I,168).

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{10} I.e. that he for whom God does not create the capacity to act (*istitâ`a*) cannot acquire a thing, whereas the Mu`tazilites hold that the capacity is before the act and is power over the act and over its opposite, and does not make the act necessary.

Chapter ten: Qur'an

The Genesis and Purport of the Qur'ân

'You should know that when in pristine ages the *tajallî a`zam* (the Most Supreme Theophany) became distinct on the plane of Ultimate Reality, a perfect emanation of It appeared there like the appearance of light on the body of the sun. That perfect emanation represented the guidance of the human souls by revelatory knowledge... After that, because of the reflection of the *tajallî a`zam* which became distinct in the center of the heart of the *mala a`lâ*, this perfect emanation got another shape. Five kinds of knowledge were fixed: the remembrance of divine bounties; the appointment of the Days of the Lord and the Requital at the Resurrection; polemics against dis-believers; the establishment of the rules for worship; economics and polity. Subsequently, when the Prophet was sent into the world, those kinds of knowledge were clothed in the garments of Arabic, and the original style of *sûras* and Qur'ân verses were fixed in the mind of the Prophet by unseen help which arose from the heart of the Holy Enclosure... And for their communication the Prophet became an instrument of God... Thus the Qur'ân is uncreated by its origin, but originated in time by coming down and being revealed in the language of the Quraysh... It came down through the intermediary of angels, is recited by the tongues of men, is written down on copies of the Qur'ân... and has been articulated through the agency of the *mala a`lâ* (*Kalimât-i tayyibât* 166f.)

The *îjâz* (inimitability) of the Qur'ân in content and form regards:

- 1) a stylistic insuperability. For at the time it was composed the Arabs were riding at full speed in the arena of eloquence, rivaling each other in the composition of thematic odes (*qasîdas*), orations, missives and argumentations. Their manner of expression, however, was restricted to those four genres of literature only. If in addition to this datum you bear simultaneously in mind that in the estimation of his compatriots Mohammed was an *ummî* (illiterate), it is indeed nothing but miraculous that from his mouth such a new and unique literary language could proceed;
- 2) a provision of intuitively acquired knowledge about ancient times, legal systems in the past and earlier religions as recorded in prior works of history;
- 3) a provision of remarkably accurate information about future events (*F.K.* 134).

In *Khizâna* 6 Shâh Walî Allâh distinguishes three levels of evolution of the Qur'ân in its created condition:

- 1) The Qur'ân reached the stage of becoming created at the moment when through the *ism mutajaddid* (Name with renewing force), which the Delhi divine equates with the Holy Spirit, the Word of God entered Mohammed's heart. This happened in the period previous to his prophetic appearance.

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- 2) It is only at the time of his factual prophethood that the divine words, present in the *`âlam al-khayâl* (world of imaginative thought) as internal speech (*kalâm nafsî*), appeared in the world of articulation and were put into 'intelligible, forceful speech and literary style'.

- 3) At this time the Qur'ân was assimilated by Mohammed's faculty of comprehension. This happened for the sake of the development of the *sharî`a*.

Nevertheless, the superior literary form of the Holy Book was not an end in itself; indeed, it had an immediate relevance to the historical setting of prophetic activities. For 'God knew that in case people are dedicated to rhetorics, the Word of God would not prove effective among them as long as it is not of extraordinary eloquence' (*Sat.* 21). Besides, not only as regards the form but also with respect to the content, Shâh Walî Allâh discerns a noteworthy adaptability of the Qur'ân to the era of its revelation. 'Know that in our opinion adequate knowledge is that which meets the requirements of the age, and that the Qur'ân ... has come down in accordance with the conditions of the moment; i.e. conformably to 'the fulness of time' (*dawrat al-kamâl*) it has brought down practical wisdom, admonition, knowledge of good works, God and the Hereafter, instruction concerning *dhikr*, *du`âs* and the stages of people striving after perfection' (*Tafh.* II, 166). 'You should be aware', so the Delhi scholar argues in another writing, 'that the Qur'ân was sent down for the correction of the Arabs as well as non-Arabs, for townspeople as well as inhabitants of the desert. Hence divine wisdom required that... what was said about God's Attributes and Names.. should be understandable without a training in metaphysics and scholastics... and that for God perfect human qualities, which were generally known and of which people were proud, should be chosen instead of Attributes with too subtle a meaning' (*F.K.* 12 f.).

When discussing the 'collection' of the Qur'ân, Shâh Walî Allâh makes a comparison between the disorderly state of the Holy Book on the death of the Prophet and the short poems and *qasîdas* taken down in notebooks, which a poet leaves in the hands of his friends at his death. These literary compositions are in danger of becoming lost, if the leaves of these notebooks land in water or fire, 'just as a flock of birds is

already widely dispersed by a soft gust of wind' (*Izâla*. II,5). Therefore, 'in the time of Abû Bakr and `Umar all the *sûras* were collected into a single volume which was called *mushaf* (collection of written leaves). Meanwhile the Companions had divided the *sûras* into four categories: 1) seven of the longest ones; 2) *sûras* containing 100 or more verses; 3) *sûras* containing less than 100 verses; 4) the *sûras* entitled *mufassal* (i.e. from the 49th chapter to the end). During the reign of `Uthmân two thirds of the *sûras* from the third category were transferred to the second one in conformity with the sense and context of the verses. Copies of this *mushaf* were sent to different parts of the empire to be treated as the final and canonical version of the Qur'ân' (F.K. 113 f.).

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Qur'ânic Teaching

For the elucidation of the teachings imparted by the Qur'ân, the Delhi scholar introduces a division of his own into five kinds of information. In the Holy Book one finds:

- 1) normative categories required for religious practice, mundane affairs, household and political economy;
- 2) polemics with four groups of erring people: the Jews, Christians, polytheists, and lukewarm followers (*munâfiqûn*);
- 3) reminding the people of the benefits of God by explaining how heaven and earth were created, and by pointing out that, thanks to divine instruction man can acquire the necessities of life by means of techniques required to control natural phenomena;
- 4) reminding the people of the Days of the Lord (*ayyâm Allâh*)¹, i.e. the lessons of history;
- 5) reminding the people of death and what happens after it at the Resurrection, the Day of Reckoning, etc.²

After this stock-taking of Qur'ânic learning, Shâh Walî Allâh continues: 'The exposition of those *`ulûm* is rendered in the style of writing used by the Arabs of early times, and not by those of later days. Hence, the legislative and terse verses of skilled authors are not deemed necessary, nor are the rules for provisos observed, as is done by scholars versed in the science of *fiqh* principles. In the polemical verses it is thought essential to refer to generally known data and to deliver profitable sermons; but in them no rational arguments are produced as is done by logicians, and no attempt is made at a close coherence between successive subject-matters, as is the rule with literary men in later times' (F.K. 11 f.). On the contrary, the Delhi divine points some ninety pages further on to a complete disregard of any systematization as characteristic of the Qur'ân; sometimes even a dislocation of verses has taken place. Thus, for instance, in *Sûra II* the coming down of verse 144 ('We see you often turn your face to heaven; now We shall turn you to a direction that shall satisfy you') must have preceded that of verse 142 ('The fools among the people will say: What from the direction which they used?') (F.K. 106).

Instead of offering a coherent line of thought when expounding sundry aspects of its message the Qur'ân prefers to give instruction through repetition, and the five categories of learning mentioned above are dealt with over and over again for the sake of *istihdâr*, i.e. a vivid evocation of its designs before the mind of the people addressed. In that manner the ideas to be conveyed 'come so clearly to the imagination of the one spoken to that he tastes their subtle shades, and they eventually overpower his heart and mind..., as happens with a poem which, after having understood its meaning at a first reading, we recite every now and then in order to taste its delicacy each time afresh. It is on account of this delight that we like to repeat it' (F.K. 130).

Qur'ânic Style and Language

However, if we wish to give some characterization of its mode of expression, the Qur'ân 'should be compared to a collection of

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edicts which rulers issue to their subjects from time to time, as the situation demands... Precisely in the same way the King of kings sent down *sûra* after *sûra* upon His Messenger for the guidance of His servants according to the requirements of the moment ... Since there is a most remarkable resemblance between the style of the *sûras* and that of royal edicts³, the pattern of an edict is chosen for the exordium and final part of the *sûras*. Thus, some edicts begin with the praise of God, others with an explanation of the motive for its being issued, and others again with the name of the sender and the person addressed. There are also short missives and extensive royal orders without a heading... Exactly in the same manner God allows one *sûra* to begin with celebrating the praise of God, another with an explanation of the motive for its being written, as for instance: 'A *sûra* which We have sent down and in which We have set down the obligatory statutes' (*Qur'ân* XXIV, 1), and again another with the name of the sender and the addressed, as for instance: 'The revelation of the Book is from God... We have sent to you the Book' (*Qur'ân* XXXIX, 1 f.). And there are also

sûras of the category of short missives and orders without a heading as for instance: 'When the hypocrites come to you' (*Qur'ân* LXIII,1)(F.K. 112 - 5).

When referring to instances of Qur'ânic 'liberties' flouting all grammatical rules, the Delhi divine recommends ignoring the linguistic laws set up by Sîbawayhî and al-Farrâ', and relating the language of the Qur'ân to the idiom of the ancient Arabs, who were not averse to syntactic licence (F.K. 157). Similarly, in the matter of Qur'ân prosody the standards of Arab poets are not strictly observed. The latter take the *`arûd* (the last foot of the first hemistich), by which correct meters are distinguished from faulty ones, as a measure of the lines of a poem and apply to them the rules of *qâfiya* (rhyme) which fix the final consonant and vowel. 'But the Qur'ân verses', so the Delhi divine argues, 'are based on a meter and *qâfiya* which are not fixed in all details, on account of which they lead to a more natural manner of expression'. In view of the different and varying literary tastes found among people like, for instance, the Indians, Greeks and Arabs, this testifies to very wise divine management. And 'when God wished to speak in the same language as man, created from a handful of earth, He turned His mind towards that flexible and elegant form of style, and not towards figures of speech appreciated by one people but not by another,... neither towards norms which may change with time' (F.K. 118 ff.).

Ta'wîl (exploration of the basic ideas in Qur'ânic tales) and *Tafsîr* (exegesis of the Qur'ân) 'On the first discipline', so we are told by the Delhi scholar, 'I wrote an essay, entitled *Ta'wîl al-ahâdîth* (A Mystical Interpretation of Prophetic Tales). Here *ta'wîl* indicates that the predispositions of a prophet and his people as well as the regulations which God deems expedient for a given epoch, form the base of prophetic stories' (F.K. 163 f.). The Qur'ânic account of 114.

Moses and the enchanters is an example which shows how predispositions of people in a prophetic milieu might be taken into consideration by divine interference. The expediency of providential rule in the situation at the Pharaoh's court is evident if one realizes that the sorcerers were attacked and overpowered by their own weapons (*Ta'wîl* 46). An illustration of the adaptation of divine action to the predisposition of a prophetic individual is that in the valley of Tuwan God spoke to Moses in a fire; this was in consonance with the Moses' fiery nature (*Ta'wîl* 45).

In the opinion of Shâh Walî Allâh the basic starting-point for a correct *tafsîr* is 'to let the Qur'ân narratives speak for themselves and leave out one's own views' (F.K. 147). Teachers are advised by him to see that their disciples first study the Qur'ân without a commentary or translation (*Tafh.* II,245). Should somebody strive after true faith, he should read the Qur'ân 'as it clarifies itself' (*Tafh.* I,37). An application of this principle that the Holy Book is understood best if it be its own commentator is the following: According to an explanation of the Companion 'Iyâd b. Himâr, in Sûra XV,9 the 'protection' of the Qur'ân means 'keeping it undamaged'. Against this exegesis the Delhi savant sets his opinion that a proper understanding of the verse can only be obtained if it is combined with Sûra LXXV, 16 - 19. Or, to put it in other words, the 'protection' referred to in Sûra XV,9 is the 'exegesis' of the Qur'ân, as it is explained in Sûra LXXV,16 - 19. In that passage 'collecting' refers to the 'collection of the Qur'ân into a book' at the time of Abû Bakr and 'Umar, the 'recitation' to the 'divine concern to provide reciters of the Qur'ân in the *umma* of the Prophet', and 'upon Us devolves the making clear of it' by 'supplying in every epoch people capable of elucidating it' (*Izâla* I,50 f.).

A correct appraisal of the self-explanatory nature of the Qur'ân texts affords the exegete not only a useful independence of commentaries stemming from the Companions, but it is also helpful in view of the urge often felt by Muslim scholars to adduce information from Jewish and Christian traditions in elucidation of succinct references in the Qur'ân to Biblical events. It turns out that in these cases the Qur'ân itself proves able to supply material to fill the gaps. Thus, for instance, the condensed report of Jesus in Sûra XIX,21 ('And We will make him a sign to mankind, and a mercy from Us') can easily be provided with some more detail by what is recorded in Sûra III,43 ('And I have been sent as an apostle to the people of Israel, saying: Now have I come to you with a sign from your Lord')(F.K. 147 f.). Shâh Walî Allâh disapproves of reading more into the Qur'ân than is intended: 'The allusions and subtle indications which *sûfis* discover in the Qur'ân do not actually belong to the discipline of *tafsîr*' (F.K. 158). The ultimate end pursued by Qur'ân exegesis is to win an assent to the message of the Qur'ân. Therefore, 'one should refrain from adding words of one's own' (F.K. 146).

With a similar carefulness in regard to the proper sense of the Qur'ân texts Shâh Walî Allâh warns against overrating the
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explanatory value of the so-called *asbâb al-nuzûl*, occurrences in the days of Mohammed which are said to have occasioned the revelation of certain Qur'ânic passages. In this field one should proceed with caution:

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'Scholars of *hadîth* append to Qur'ân verses many things which are actually not *asbâb al-nuzûl* but arguments of Companions that they advanced in support of a private view when they had controversies on the correct interpretation of a particular Qur'ân verse'. Yet in two respects *asbâb al-nuzûl* might be useful:

1. The understanding of certain passages would be difficult indeed if one did not have them at one's disposal. An instance of this is the story told on account of the strange phrase ('no blame') used in Sûra II,158 in connection of traversing the distance between Safâ and Marwa seven times during the *`umra* (Little Pilgrimage). Once `A'isha was asked: 'If running between Safâ and Marwa is obligatory, what is the sense of 'No blame' attached to it?' She replied: 'There were people who avoided it, because they thought doing it was a sin. Therefore it is said: 'No blame'.

2. Sometimes *asbâb al-nuzûl* can be of help in the illustration of universal truths, implied but hidden in Qur'ân verses merely stating 'which came down like this' (i.e. without any mention of the moment and reason of their descent). Then the very intention of the enigmatic context is to bring to light the proper purport of the Qur'ânic passage by means of an illustrative story from the time of the Prophet (F.K. 69 ff. and 76 f.).

When discussing the *mutashâbihât* (the 'ambiguous' Qur'ân verses) as opposed to the *muhkamât* (the 'perspicuous' verses), Shâh Walî Allâh is two-tongued. Putting himself on a par with the average believer, he scorns the efforts of the *mutakallimûn* in explaining the *mutashâbihât* dealing with anthropomorphisms or eschatological subjects, and declares: 'My course is that of Mâlik b. Anas (d. 796), of Sufyân al-Thawrî (d. 778), or Ibn al-Mubâarak (d. 797) and the other ancients, and that is to take the *mutashâbihât* at their face value without engaging in hermeneutic ingenuities'

(F.K. 156). Knowledge of the *mutashâbihât* should be left to God, for it concerns issues of too speculative a nature, about which unanimity can never be gained in the *umma* (B.B. 204).

In his capacity as a gnostic, however, the Delhi divine claims that for him the *mutashâbihât* have become perspicuous because of his having been a witness of the Holy Enclosure and having become conversant with its processes (*Fuyûd*, 25th Vision).

Tahrîf (distortion of the texts of the Holy Scripture)

The charge of falsifying the texts of the Holy Scripture or the garbling of their meaning is in Islam usually directed against the *ahl al-kitâb* or against the Shî'îs (by the Sunnîs) and the Sunnîs (by the Shî'îs). In the first case it pertains to words of the Bible, in the second to readings of the Qur'ân. Here again Shâh Walî Allâh shows his originality by taking Jews, Christians and Muslims conjointly to task for tampering with their Holy books. Instead of merely accusing those who are outside the pale 116.

of his own community his criticism is levelled at his co-religionists as well: '*Tahrîf* is spread in all sorts of groups. Among the sûfis teachings are divulged - and this applies especially to views pertaining to the doctrine of *tawhîd* - which cannot be brought into line with the Book and the *sunna*... As for the *fiqh* of the jurisprudents, you often do not know what made them settling things as they did... And where is the end if I start to mention the errors of the philosophers and poets, the rich and the common people who worship idols and make the tombs of saints places of worship and festivities?' (*Tafh.* II, 135).

'To the causes of *tahrîf* belong:

a) Laxity (*tahâwun*). The essence of this is that the generation following the disciples of a prophet neglects the *salât*, follows its lusts (cf. *Qur'ân*, XIX, 59) and does not care for the spread of the acts and articles of faith... Subsequently, another generation tainted with still more indifference follows it, so that nearly all religious knowledge falls into oblivion... On that account the religious community of Noah and Abraham disappeared...

b) Forced hardness (*ta`ammuq*). The essence of this is that when one of the *umma* learns of a command or prohibition of the expounder of the *sharî'a* (sc. Mohammed)... , he extends the regulation to a somewhat comparable case... Thus, when the expounder of the law prescribed fasting to check the passions and forbade sexual intercourse for a period, people thought that was also forbidden to kiss one's wife... Then the Messenger of God disclosed the wrongness of this conclusion⁵ and explained that it was an instance of *tahrîf*.

c) Excessive strictness (*tashaddud*). The essence of this is that rigorous forms of worship, not imposed by the expounder of the *sharî'a*, are chosen such as... the observation of celibacy... This is a disease of Jewish and Christian recluses.

d) Advancing an arbitrary personal opinion not founded on logical reasoning for reasons of public convenience (*istihsân*). The essence of this is that when somebody might have discovered that for every rule given by the expounder of the *sharî'a* a rationale and an appropriate application is provided and that legislation is founded on this base, he still seizes the opportunity to avail himself of certain inner meanings of the legislation in order to introduce regulations which he thinks expedient for the people. Thus, for instance, when the Jews thought that the expounder of the Torah had ordained heavy punishments as a

prevention of crimes and believed that the penalty of stoning to death in case of adultery (see Deuteronomy XXII,21) would give rise to dissension and squabbling,so that in it there would be a greater evil,they regarded the blackening of the face and skin with coal a suitable substitute for stoning. Accordingly, the Prophet explained that this was a *tahrîf* (see Mu. *Hudûd* 15)...

e) The following of an (unauthentic) *ijmâ`* (consensus). The essence of this is that when among religious authorities, there are people of united opinion to whom common men accord their confidence, assuming that they are mostly or generally in the right; so the people believe this unanimity to be decisive 117.

evidence for the validity of a law, while it is not based on the Book and *sunna*. This kind of unanimity is unlike the *ijmâ`*, which the community agreed on... The Word of God says in respect to this unauthentic *ijmâ`*: 'And when they are told,'Follow what God has sent down', they answer,'No; but we will follow the usages which we found with our forefathers' (*Qur'ân* II,170). The only argument the Jews have for their denial of the prophethood of Jesus and Mohammed are the inquiries that their ancestors made into the life stories of the two,and did not find them fulfilling the conditions of prophethood. And the Christians have many laws which are at variance with the Torah and the New Testament. The only ground for it is the *ijmâ`* of their ancestors.

f) Reliance on the teaching (*taqlîd*) of somebody who is not 'preserved' by God from what is not right, i.e. who is not a prophet whose infallibility is established. The essence of this is that when one of the *`ulamâ`* has used discretionary reasoning (*ijtihâd*) in a legal matter, his followers believe that he is surely,or at least most probably,in the right. In this way they can even act in contrary to a sound tradition. This kind of *taqlîd*, however, is not the same as the *taqlîd*,on which the *umma* is agreed... (and which implies that the man of *ijtihâd* who is relied on) has carefully examined what the Prophet has stated on that very issue...

g) Mixing of two religions so that in the end the one cannot be distinguished from the other. This can happen when someone who previously professed another religion enters the Muslim community, but still retains an emotional attachment to branches of knowledge of this former group. Consequently, he tries to introduce such matters into the Muslim community... Such matters which have crept into our religion include: lore of the Israelites, admonishments of preachers of the 'heathen darkness', philosophy of the Greeks,imprecations of the Babylonians,histories of the Persians,astrology,geomancy and defensive apologetics (*H.B.* I,120 ff.).

h) 'Instead of assigning to a word its obvious meaning ,to choose a meaning you yourself think proper. The Prophet has already alluded to this,saying: 'Presently people will be found who will name wine by another designation and fornication by another appellation. And they will assert that this is not what God has forbidden in His Book. So there is no objection to it for you' (Ibn Mâdja,*Ashriba* 8). Have you not met people who assert that intoxicating liquor prepared from honey and the like is not wine at all,and then declare it lawful?' (*B.B.* 127).

Naskh (withdrawal) On the delicate subject of *naskh*,the repeal of a former heavenly decree substantiated into a Qur'ân verse by a newly revealed message,the Delhi scholar has again a lot to say. To begin with: there are various abrogations of regulations, including the following:

a) progressive developments in the personality and status of a prophet. After his military expedition to Tabûk in 630 when he

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declared solemnly: 'We have returned from the inferior type of *jihâd* (with the object of the expansion of Islam) to the superior one (i.e. the inner struggle against one's evil inclinations). Herewith the Prophet wanted to imply a return from the world of perceptible forms to the world of the non-material (*Khizâna* 6). So Mohammed attained a rank higher than the previous one.

b) changes in the spiritual state of a prophet. An example of this is given in the tale of Abraham and the sacrifice of his son. For, when Abraham had come very near to the Holy One, he understood that the universal aspect of sacrifice would have its concrete expression in the sacrifice of his son who was the best qualified for it. Therefore, the divine Name which manifested Itself in his innermost being, ordered him to make this sacrifice. But as soon as he recovered from the immersion into his innermost being, he confined himself to the substitutive sacrifice of an animal.

c) a situation requiring new statutes because of rites that have become obsolete,as was the case,for example,with transmutations in the ways of *zakât*. At first, it consisted of an *`atîra* (ewe offered as a means of purification to a pagan divinity during the month of Rajab); next, the appointing of a special time for a sacrifice was repealed,and after that only the *dhabh* (victim detained for immolation) remained in force.

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Finally, the institute of *nisâb* (minimum amount of property liable to payment of the *zakât*) was introduced (*Khizâna* 8).

In an excursus on the purpose to be derived from *Qur'ân* II,106 ('And for whatever verse We repeal or cause to forget, We bring a better or the like of it'), Shâh Walî Allâh argues that two sorts of *naskh* can be distinguished: 1. Pertaining to the individual reasoning (*ijtihâd*) of the Prophet. As we readily understand, Mohammed himself made a regular study of the implications to be inferred from the ordinances sent down from above. But then it might happen that God completed or corrected the results of His Messenger's research. An instance of completion is the revelation of the passage concerning the *qibla* which had to be changed (see *Qur'ân* II,144). Another divine correction of prophetic *ijtihâd* can be reconstructed from an abrogation of a prescription mentioned in a *hadîth*, viz. with respect to the prohibition of making *nabîdh* (an intoxicating drink made of dates and barley) except in animal skins (see Bu. *Ashriba* 8). Later on he recognized that the intoxicating attributes characteristic of an alcoholic beverage are its bubbling and evaporating, and not the effect of something extraneous to it like a certain container of the drink.

2. Pertaining to the requirements of the moment. In the course of time certain laws may lose their relevance on account of which they are revised or repealed. Thus, for instance, at the time when the Prophet emigrated to Medina the fellow emigrants could no longer count on assistance from their blood relations. Consequently, the *Qur'ân* was revealed basing inheritance on a relationship of brotherhood. God explained the benefit of this when He said: 'Unless you do this, there will be sedition on the

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earth and great corruption' (*Qur'ân* VIII,73). But when Islam got a stronger hold and kinsfolk of the emigrants joined them, hereditary right was founded again on consanguinity.

When towards the end of this excursus Shâh Walî Allâh arrives at the question which meaning is finally to be attached to the words 'the better' or 'the like' in *Qur'ân* II,106, he first concludes that through the establishment of Islam in the Medinian period Mohammed became the caliph of the nation. Accordingly, he proposes taking 'the better' as a reference to 'prophethood enhanced by caliphate (political rule by the Prophet)'; on the other hand, 'the like' would merely imply that 'laws change with the situation' (*H.B.* I,123 f.).

In another work, i.e. *al-Fawz al-kabîr* (pp. 56 f. & 151) Shâh Walî Allâh starts with the observation that the concept early Muslims held of the *naskh*-principle differs to a great extent from the views of later generations. 'The Companions and Succeeders took *naskh* in a literal sense, i.e. of 'removal', and not in the more restricted sense of the scholars who admit a larger share of speculative reason in the principles of religious law (*usûliyyûn*). According to the latter *naskh* merely denotes 'removal of a provision' in an earlier *Qur'ân* verse by a later *Qur'ân* verse. The occasion for it could be: either the circumstance that it was no longer obligatory to act on a certain provision, or the situation that the discovery of a particular meaning in one *Qur'ân* verse suddenly threw new light on the purport of another *Qur'ân* verse, on account of which its former interpretation was abolished, or the fact that at a given moment the incidental character of a certain stipulation in a *Qur'ân* verse is recognized so that a general application of it is no longer desirable'.

But if *naskh* is understood in the more extensive sense attached to it by representatives of the first Muslim generations, it can be applicable to instances such as the 'removal' of astrology and geomancy, or the abrogation of particular religious customs dating from the time of paganism such as the clipping of an ewe's ear to consecrate it or setting a she-camel at liberty to pasture freely, after having brought forth females (*Khizâna* 10). 'So with the Companions and Succeeders reason got a wide domain to wander in for the application of *naskh*; and as a result of that one came to the pretty total of 500 repealed *Qur'ân* verses!'

After this exposition of the two chief currents in the early history of Islamic *naskh* practice, the Delhi scholar himself in this case⁶ gives preference to the viewpoint of the later generations, simply because it results in a considerably lower number of repealed verses. And in imitation of Abû Bakr b. `Abdallâh b. al-`Arabî (d. 1148) and Jalâl al-Dîn al-Suyûtî (d. 1505) he reduced their number to a score. But the Delhi savant deems even twenty too great a number. If the procedure of *tawjîh* be adopted, a further reduction is possible. In origin, *tawjîh* (i.e. providing a *wajh*, an alternative decision) designates a method applied in *fiqh*, for deriving rules from decisions of the founder of a *madhhab*. But Shâh Walî Allâh makes it a new art, by 120.

which contradictions between indications or between the 'rational' and the 'traditional' can be suspended and divergent issues can be made congruous (*F.K.* 153). To give one of the applications of this kind of *tawjîh* by which he manages to render plausible the redundancy of *naskh*: 'There is no need to regard *Qur'ân* III,102 ('Fear God with the fear that He deserves') to be abrogated by *Qur'ân* LXIV,16 ('Fear God, then, as much as you can'), because the former verse relates to *shirk*, *kufr* and other matters of

faith, whereas the latter bears upon religious practice, for instance if somebody cannot perform ablution with water, he may do it with sand' (F.K. 61 f.). By thus searching out the *wajh* (contextual motive) implied in the verses which are still supposed by al-Suyûtî to be *nâsikh* and *mansûkh*, Shâh Walî Allâh succeeds in abating the total number of *naskh*-cases to five only. Namely *Qur'ân* II,180 cancelled by IV,12; II,240 by II,234; VIII,65 by VIII,66; XXXIII,50 and LVIII,12 by LVIII,13.

Among other kinds of privileged learning concerning the *Qur'ân* the Delhi scholar also reckons:
 a) his translation of the *Qur'ân* into Persian, called *Fath al-Rahmân* (F.K. 164). In the preface he says that first of all his translation is meant for the sons of craftsmen and soldiers. As soon as they have attained the age of discretion they should make use of it, lest they are misled by the discourses of heretics or become confused by the idle talk of philosophers and Hindus;
 b) the art of drawing prognostications from verses of the *Quran* (*khawâss al-Qur'ân*). On this charismatic gift Shâh Walî Allâh comments: 'Formerly, people used to speak of two categories of *Qur'ân*ic *khawâss*: *du`â`* and the like; magic (*sihr*) and the like - God forbid! -. But for me a door for a direct pouring of divine knowledge had been opened beyond that traditional lore. All at once the most beautiful divine Names, most sublime *Qur'ân* verses and benedictory *du`â`s* were put in my lap as a personal gift'. Here an institutionalizing of magic practices is obviously denounced. And the argument continues: 'The selection or composition of *Qur'ân* verses, divine Names and *du`â`s* (to be used in an emergency) is subject to criteria for which no rule can be fixed' (i.e. it is all a question of a charisma to be accorded by the Unseen World) (F.K. 164 f.).

It should be noted that although the Delhi divine rejects Black Magic 8) and an uncharismatic use of *khawâss* in the passage quoted, he does not generally condemn magic as such. Elsewhere, for instance, he gives the advice: 'Let somebody visited by disease seek healing with the aid of perfect charms (*ruqan*) on which *Qur'ân* verses and Names of God are written' (B.B. 59). For Mohammed himself urged the people to do so, 'in order to keep them from invoking the help of idols, as they were used to in pre-Islamic times' (H.B. II,34). With great respect reference is made to al-Shâdhilî (d. 1258) and al-Bûnî (d. 1125) who are said 'to have substituted prognostication by stars and the like for fumigations (in view of a spell), recitations of divine Names and of appropriate *Qur'ân* verses' (Tafh.I,89).

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To put it briefly, in the course of time there seems to have been some development in Shâh Walî Allâh's views of magic. This can be gathered from a comparison of notions concerning the *hurûf muqatta`ât* (mysterious letters) as they are set forth in one of his early writings, and in later works. In *Hawâmi`*, a commentary of the famous *hizb al-bahr* of al-Shâdhilî, the Delhi divine points to the effectiveness of magic proper with respect to those enigmatic letters with which 29 *sûras* begin. 'If an evil-doer appears and his terror and power get the upper hand, one should pronounce *kâf*, *hâ*, *ayn* and *sâd* (letters at the beginning of *sûra* XIX) and at every letter one should close a finger of one's right hand; then one should say: 'Our protection'. Next, one should pronounce *hâ*, *mîn*, *ayn*, *sîn* and *qâf* (at the beginning of *sûra* XLII) and at every letter one should close a finger of one's left hand: then one should say: 'Our guardianship' (Haw. 52). In later works we also find expositions of the *hurûf muqatta`ât*, but without any magic context. Then it is stated that they represent names of *sûras* summarising their contents, and the effort is concentrated on tracing the symbolic sense the letters contain. 'Thus *alif*, *lâm*, *mîm* at the beginning of *sûra* II indicate that the unspecified world of divine mystery (*ghayb*) becomes specified in the soiled empirical world'. This becomes understandable, so we are taught, if we realize that the *alif*, which points at the *ghayb* of the transcendental world, is used in Arabic for questions about matters we wish to be informed of, for instance in respect of things still to be specified. The *lâm* indicates specifying; hence this letter is added where there is a question of rendering distinct. And the *mîm*, because of its uniting the lips when being pronounced, points to soiled primary matter (*hayûlâ*), in which all kinds of essentials are untied and kept together and which, after leaving the world not conditioned by time and space, came into our empirical world. 'Therefore, *alif*, *lâm*, *mîm* hint at a transcendental outpouring which, entering into the world where things are particularized and bound by space, becomes specified in items compatible with the prevalent customs and ideas of the people, and sets out to remove the hardness of hearts by admonition and to fight evil thought and bad customs by defining good and evil' (F.K. 168 ff., *Khizâna* 10).

{1} Also a *Qur'ân*ic phrase (see *Sûra* XIV,5). In illustration of such lessons 'God chose histories which were already well-known and the contemporaries of Mohammed had become familiar through an age-long

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intercourse with Jews; and not curious or strange tales, nor Persian or Indian stories teaching immorality. The divine Wisdom behind it is that the attention of common people, when they hear stories of rare events, is drawn to curious details... and not to the essence of those stories' (F.K. 44 f.).

{2} The third category of Qur'ânic lore was a 'support' (ʿumda) by which Abraham in particular was sustained, while the fourth one was an insight with which notably Moses was favoured. But 122.

knowledge of this fifth branch of Qur'ânic learning was reserved for Mohammed (H.B. I, 55). This last remark is indeed very true, since the Old Testament is almost silent on eschatological issues.

{3} See also Tafh. II, 123 and Khizâna 6; 'The literary style of the sûras resembles partly the style of a missive (risâla), partly that of a qasîda (polythematic ode with a characteristic tripartite structure)'. The three parts into which a sûra can be divided are; a) an introduction, b) the filling material, i.e. the tales and c) the conclusion.

{4} Likewise Shâh Walî Allâh disapproves of the endeavours of Mu'tazilites to read an allegorical meaning into Qur'ânic anthropomorphizations and eschatological images. One ought to rest satisfied with the literal meanings of the terms used (Ta'wîl 82). When, however, in a later writing he sets forth that the balance, which will be set up for the Day of Resurrection (Qur'ân XXI, 47), stands for the divine attribute of the faculty of discrimination by which good and bad actions are discerned (Khizâna 9), he himself, in fact, appears not averse to the interpretative methods of the Mu'tazilites.

{5} See Mu. Siyâm 62: 'A'isha related how the Messenger of God kissed one of his wives while he was fasting, and then she smiled'.

{6} An interesting exception, for as a rule Shâh Walî Allâh, being an admirer of Ibn Taymiyya, exhorts to follow in the footsteps of the first Muslims and to keep away from the practice of the 'ulamâ' of later ages.

{7} Invocations to which miraculous effects of an apotropaic nature are ascribed. They are also termed hizb (litany chanted during a liturgical session), and in that case often bear the names of great mystics, like 'Abd al-Qâdir al-Jîlânî, al-Shâdhilî. {8} This is implied in the interjection: 'God forbid!'. For an explicit denunciation of sihr as being 'concealed evil' see B.B. 78.

Chapter eleven: Hadith

The Importance of the Traditions

The *hadīths* form the foundation of knowledge. 'No nobler task can one set oneself than to try to become a *muhaddith* (scholar versed in the *hadīth*) (*Fuyūd*, 24th Vision). *Muhaddiths* are more beloved by Mohammed than *sūfis*, though the latter may surpass the former in the refinement of spiritual qualities (*al-Durr al-thamīn fi'l-mubashshirāt al-nabī al-amīn*, 11th tradition). Traditions provide the material for the following sciences: theology, ethics, cosmology, angelology, jurisprudence, eschatology, knowledge of prophetic tales, the science of spiritual perfection, of actions of moral elevation which bring man into contact with God, and the exegesis of the Qur'ān (*Khizāna* 3). Consequently, the science of Tradition is the mainstay and principal part of sciences which offer established truths (*H.B.* I, 2). And in the curriculum of the Delhi savant laid down for posterity, he stipulates that as soon as a pupil has acquired sufficient proficiency in Arabic, he should be taught the *Muwatta* of Mālik b. Anas (*Majmū'a-i wasāyā-i arba'a*, p. 80). The Traditions as such ought to determine the line of conduct to be adopted (*Khizāna* 10). So the 'raising of hands' at the beginning of the three forms of magnification (i.e. of bowing, coming back to the erect position and prostrating) of the *salāt* is incumbent, since the Traditions in support of it outnumber those opposed to (*H.B.* II, 10). Equally, private investigation should submit to views found in the traditional literature. 'If the theses I framed in respect to astrology and divination', so Shāh Walī Allāh declares, 'turn out to be at variance with what is recorded in the *sunna*, then of course the opinion of the latter will prevail' (*H.B.* II, 195). 'The orally transmitted Tradition is actually the only means to preserve religion to the end of time, and there is no recovery if it is affected by corruption' (*H.B.* I, 171). Hence, provisions derived from the *sharī'a* are to be tested by the *sunna*; if they do not agree with it they are to be rejected. An expert of jurisprudence is only reliable when he is a traditionist as well, as is the case, for instance, with the Shāfi'ī *faqīh* al-Bayhaqī and the Hanafī *faqīh* al-Tahāwī (*Tafh.* I, 28). At the same time Shāh Walī Allāh possesses enough sense of reality to admit that the Companions, the virtual suppliers of Traditions, were not blameless. Nonetheless, we are deemed to remain silent about their faults in order to avoid disruption of the Muslim community's solidarity (*Tafh.* II, 244).

Valuation of the Collections of *hadīth*

Shāh Walī Allāh classifies the various collections of *hadīth* under the following categories, according to the authority to be assigned to them: 1. To the highest level belong the collections in which the two

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virtues typical of traditions (i.e. that of soundness and repute) have attained a perfect form. They are considered *mutawâtir*, i.e. handed down by so many transmitters that there could be no collusion. 'The criterion for concurrent traditions (*tawâtur*) is not the number of transmitters, nor their status, but rather the certainty in the hearts of the people which follows the hearing of the report' (*H.B.* I, 149). The only three collections that can be reckoned to this supreme class are the *Muwatta* of Mālik b. Anas who interprets the traditions from the point of view of practice, and the *Sahīh* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim. The Delhi scholar wholeheartedly endorses the view ascribed to al-Shāfi'ī, that after the Book of God there is no book as sound as the *Muwatta*. If you want to have an idea of its worth then you must compare the *Muwatta* with works like the *Kitāb al-âthār* of Muhammad al-Shaybānī (d. 805) and the *Amālī* of Abū Yūsuf (d. 798) (both famous Hanafī jurists). You will recognize that between them lies the distance between the East and the West (*H.B.* I, 134). It is, in fact, the instrument and foundation of the school of Mālik, a support and capital of the school of al-Shāfi'ī and Ahmad b. Hanbal, and a lamp and lantern of the school of Abū Hanīfa. You should also realize that collections of the *musannaf* type (i.e. arranged in chapters according to different topics) such as the *Sahīh* of Muslim, the *Sunan* of Abū Dā'ūd and al-Nasā'ī, and what in the *Sahīh* of al-Bukhārī and the *Jāmi'* of al-Tirmidhī is connected with the *fiqh* are but so many extracts and appendices of the *Muwatta* itself, in as far as these works supply additional *isnāds* for the traditions stated in the *Muwatta*, be they *mursal* (a tradition in which a Successor quotes the Prophet directly), *marfū'* (a tradition traced back to the Prophet whether or not the *isnād* is complete), or *mawqūf* (with an *isnād* going back only to one Companion) (*Musawwâ* I, 5). Besides, it is only by means of the *Muwatta*, that the door of *ijtihad* (ability to reason the Law) can be kept open (*Musaffâ* 12). In that connection, we have to bear in mind that the *Muwatta* as such is rather a *corpus juris* than a *corpus traditionum*. 'Its intention is not to sift and collect the 'healthy' elements of traditions circulating in the Islamic world but to illustrate the law, ritual and religious practice' (I. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, London 1971, vol. II, 198). In line with this is also Shāh Walī Allāh's notion that the public interest (*maslaha*) represents a more valid basis for human behaviour than the mere

preference of a legist.

2. The second category reaches the rank of *mustafîd* (widely spread) traditions which are well-known and transmitted by three or more Companions. Works like the *Sunan* of Abû Dâ'ûd, the *Jâmi`* of al-Tirmidhî and the *Mujtabâ* of al-Nasâ'î belong to it, and the *Musnad* of Ahmad b. Hanbal is counted as approaching this category closely (*H.B.* I, 133 f.).

3. Thirdly we have *musnads* (with traditions arranged according to the names of the transmitters), *jâmi`*'s and *musannafs* which were compiled before, in, or after Bukhârî and Muslim's lifetime. They contain traditions which are sound, good, weak, *ma`rûf* 125.

('recognized', i.e. weak, yet known because confirmed by another weak tradition), *gharîb* ('uncommon', i.e. resting on the authority of only one Companion), *shâdh* ('anomalous', i.e. a tradition from a single authority which differs from what others report), *munkar* ('objectionable', i.e. of weak authority contradicted by a weaker one) or *maqlûb* ('transposed', i.e. known to have come from a person other than the soi-disant reporter). Among scholars these traditions do not enjoy such a good reputation, though they are not to be rejected outright. To them belong the *Musnads* of al-Tayâlisî (d. 818), of `Abd b. Humayd (d. 864) and Abû `Alî al-Bazzâz (d. 1034), and the *Musannafs* of `Abd al-Razzâq (d. 827) and Abû Bakr b. Abî-Shayba (d. 849). The very aim of the compilers was to collect whatever seemed secure but without applying any correction (*H.B.* I, 134 f.).

4. The fourth category comprises collections composed in later times. Here one finds *inter alia* products of prattling preachers and heretics as well as stories from Israelite sources. The most trustworthy traditions in this category are the weak but suspicious ones. Evaluating these four categories, Shâh Walî Allâh states: 'The *muhaddiths* only place confidence in traditions of the first and second rank... For consultation in matters of faith and morality one should not touch traditions of the third rank, unless one belongs to the able critics who are acquainted with the names of the transmitters and the defects in the *isnâds* of the traditions... As for the traditions of the fourth rank... sectarians such as the Râfidites (an extremist Shî'a faction), Mu'tazilites, etc. can easily extract from these evidence for their points of view; but in the disputes of the scholars of *hadîth* they cannot be adduced as references' (*H.B.* I, 135).

5. If so desired, still a fifth rank can be superadded, having no basis in the four preceding ones. They contain ingredients which shameless people among specialists in religious law, sûfîs and historians foisted into their religion. 'Thus they have produced in Islam a great calamity' (*H.B.* I, 135).

Deduction of the legal import carried by the Traditions

Mohammed himself warned the people to proceed with caution in respect of directives of the Prophet, bearing in mind the factual relevance of the statute treated. So two categories of statements carrying unequal authority are to be distinguished in the traditions: 1. Concerning things pertaining to the prophetic mission as for instance information about the Hereafter, regulation of the canonical rites, and the like. In this case the line to be taken is formulated in *Qur'ân* LIX, 7: 'Adopt whatever command the Messenger gives you, and refrain from whatever he forbids you';

2. Concerning issues not connected with the prophetic mission such as for instance pronouncements on medical questions or methods of the fertilization of a palm-tree. On the subject of such 126.

empirical matters the Prophet declared: 'I am only a human being; whenever I give you a command in religious affairs, you should obey it, but whenever I give you a direction based on my personal opinion, then keep in mind that I am only a human being' (*Mu. Fadâ'il* 140) (*H.B.* I, 128). Thus the advice offered by the Prophet. The *umma* on its part, however, so the Delhi scholar continues a few pages further on, deduced conclusions from the *hadîths* either by sticking to the literal meaning of the texts, or by drawing inferences via personal discretion. Leading applicators of this second method were `Umar, `Alî, Ibn Mas`ûd (d. 652/3) and Ibn `Abbâs (d. 686). Both practices have their specific deficiencies and need each other to fill in the gaps. Possible dangerous consequences of the first method are:

a) that a general bearing is attached to a rule which was merely meant for a special, restricted situation;
b) that an incidental advice which may have been made in the emphatic voice in order to stimulate to utmost exertion, is taken to imply an absolute command or prohibition.

Weak points characteristic of the second method are:

a) the chance that a statement from another Companion later discloses that the independent reasoning (*ijtihâd*) had been mistaken. Thus, for instance, Ibn Mas`ûd and `Umar were both of the opinion that *tayammum* (performing the ritual ablution with sand instead of water) does not purify a man who is sexually

defiled. Then, however, `Ammâr b. Yâsir (d. 657) records the event on a journey in which the Prophet had told him that his rolling in the dust was a sufficient purification in the present conditions (Mu. Hayd 110-3); b) that often the inference of a good idea by common consent of the leaders of the Companions turns out to be in conflict with the principles of the *sharî'a*.

In view of this state of affairs, so Shâh Walî Allâh concludes, it is necessary for him who nowadays deals with *fiqh* to be versed in both ways of understanding a *hadîth* (i.e. expertise in both the reports themselves and the methodology for interpreting their legal implications) and to be able to connect the two (H.B. I, 131 f.).

A problem, with which every *faqîh* will inevitably be confronted, is the apparent contradictions between various traditions. When tackling this vexed question, Shâh Walî Allâh begins by setting up two preliminary principles:

1. one should proceed from the premise that the inconsistency discovered is not real, but only produced by our mind and wrong understanding;
2. unless contradictions are too obvious to negate, one may adopt any line of conduct prescribed in a tradition.

When, however, in our eyes two traditions seem to conflict - one stating that the Prophet acted in this way and another reporting that he acted in that way - and concern customs and not matters of worship, they are actually not opposing one another; one of them mentions something that is recommendable and the other something that is permitted... In keeping with this criterion one 127.

ought to settle questions whether one has to raise the hands during the *salât* to the ears or merely to the shoulders... Or there may be a hidden reason for legislation because of which at a given point of time one course of action is obligatory, and at another moment the other course of action is prescribed; or a mode of procedure is obligatory at one time, whereas at another moment there is a dispensation from this obligation. Hence it is requisite to search for the rationales (*ilal*)... and if the rationales appear to be different, one ought to act accordingly. To give an example: Once a young man asked the Prophet whether he was allowed to kiss his wife during the fast. The answer was in the negative. It was, however, conceded to an old man. From the context we can gather that it was refused in the first instance because of its being harmful to the soul; but with the old man, who was too strict on himself, the case was otherwise... When, however, it is impossible to reconcile two contradictory traditions or to explain them by each other, and when nothing is known of an abrogating factor (*naskh*), then they turn out to be undeniably opposing one another, so that one must make a choice between the two. An instance of it are the traditions treating the questions whether a *wudû'* is required or not after touching one's privy member; or whether a marriage is permissible for a pilgrim in the state of temporary consecration when performing the pilgrimage, or not. Still preferable is the tradition which is based on more transmitters, or authorized by a transmitter who is a specialist in religious law, ... or whose the text is more convincing and without ambiguity, or whose the rule and rationale are more in conformity with the injunctions of the *sharî'a* (H.B. I, 138 f., 173). A study of *hadîths* also proves that a lot of disagreement existed among the Companions and Successors themselves about the legal import deducible from acts and statements of the Prophet. The Delhi divine, however, is in no way abashed by this condition of things: 'I declare that at a given moment God inspired me with a criterion (*mîzân*) to indicate the cause of any difference of opinion among the members of the religious community of Mohammed... In consequence of this, a treatise useful for this purpose has come into being which I have called 'Fair Elucidation of the Cause of Disagreement' (*Insâf* 2 f.). In the exposition that follows we read: You should realize that the Messenger of God has not composed legal works in his blessed age and did not discuss laws at that time as today's *faqîhs* are doing... The line usually taken in the entourage of the Prophet was like this: When, for instance, he performed the *wudû'* in the presence of the Companions, they simply imitated him and did not receive any additional explanation of a special basic element or preferred mode of behaviour... They rarely put questions... During his lifetime they interrogated about thirteen matters which are all recorded in the Qur'ân... From the context they used to infer the purpose of a thing, whether it was permitted or a desirable act, or an abolished rule, and so on. With such indications and indicia they could manage... Once, after the death of Mohammed, the Companions had dispersed over various 128.

regions, each one had become the model in the place they settled; so they were asked on many occasions for a legal opinion about questions arisen. Each of them answered according to what he had retained in his memory or had deduced from the behaviour of the Prophet. When that Companion had retained nothing in his memory about a certain matter and had no deduction available, he tried to find his own solutions to legal problems (*Insâf* 3 f.).

'Thereupon various legal differences arose among them owing to the following causes:

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- a) One companion had heard a rule referring to a certain affair or a legal opinion, but another Companion had not. So the latter tried to find his own solution... An instance of this is what the Imâm Mâlik relates about Abû Hurayra in *Muwatta* II, 89, namely that to the latter's persuasion the fast will not be valid for him who starts a day in Ramadân in the state of major ritual impurity. He held this view until some wives of the Prophet told him that he was wrong, and that the Prophet did fast even if in the morning he were in a state of grave pollution. Consequently, Abû Hurayra retracted his opinion...
- b) Differences in evaluation. Companions had observed a certain activity of the Prophet. The one made the conclusion that it was to be valued as a means of drawing near to God, while another Companion considered it merely an ethically indifferent action...
- c) Disagreement based on a conjecture (*wahm*). When, for example, people saw the Messenger of God performing the pilgrimage, some of them imagined that he did this as somebody who performs the *hajj* as such, others that he did so as somebody who combines the *umra* (Little Pilgrimage) and the *hajj* without a break, and again others that he did so as somebody who performs the *umra* first, then enjoys the freedom of normal life, not assuming the state of ritual consecration again until the last minutes of the *hajj*...
- d) Disagreement because of inadvertence and forgetfulness. An instance of this is what is related by tradition about Ibn `Umar (d. 693) who had asserted: 'The Messenger of God once performed the *umra* in the month Rajab'. When `A'isha learnt this, she stated that Ibn `Umar was under a misapprehension (Bu. *Umra* 3).
- e) Disagreement owing to a hasty conclusion. An example of this is the statement handed down from Ibn `Umar that the dead will be tormented by the lamentation of his family over him. Thereupon `A'isha remonstrated that he had not caught the true purport of the words of the Messenger of God spoken when the bier of a Jewess passed before him and the members of her family were bewailing her: 'They are weeping over her while she is tormented in her grave'. From these words Ibn `Umar had understood that the torment was actually related to the lamentation (Mu. *Janâ'iz* 25).
- f) Disagreement in respect of the rationale of a rule. An instance of this is the rule concerning standing up on seeing a bier. One says: it is done out of respect for the angels - then it applies to every dead person, a believer as well as an infidel; another says: it is done out of respect for death - then again it applies to every dead person -; but someone else mentions: a bier carrying a Jew was brought past the Messenger of 129.

God. Then he stood up, because he did not like having it higher than his head - then it applies only to an infidel (Mu. *Janâ'iz* 78).

- g) Disagreement because of a different reconciling of two conflicting rulings. An example of this is that the Messenger of God granted permission to contract temporary marriages in the Year of Khaybar (i.e. A.H. 7) and then forbade it. Later in the Year of Awtâs (i.e. after the battle of Hunayn in A.H. 8) he again permitted it and then forbade it. Ibn `Abbâs states: 'The dispensation was on account of a state of emergency. Yet the prohibition continued to exist. The majority of the Companions, however, held that the dispensation was a temporary concession and that the prohibition has abrogated this' (*Insâf* 8 f., 11-14).
- h) Disagreement due to different ranks of eminence. One Companion was a rightly guided solitary, another a caliph, again another a *faqîh*, and again another a super-*faqîh* 1} (*Khizâna* 10).
- In short, the Companions of the Prophet held different views (*madhâhib*); and similarly the Successors derived from them whatever each of them thought proper for his own use... Thus everyone of the Successors entertained his own opinions and every region had its own appointed *imâm* as, for instance, ... al-Hasan al-Basrî (d. 728) in Basra and Tâ'ûs b. Kaysan (d. 724) in Yemen (*Insâf* 15 f.).

Disclosure of Underlying Ideas (*asrâr*) in the Texts of Hadîth

As we have found before this, part of Shâh Walî Allâh's vocation was to expose *asrâr* contained in traditions. Thus the prophetic saying: 'He who beats the cheeks, tears the front of his garments, and cries out as people did in pre-Islamic times, does not belong to us' (Bu. *Janâ'iz* 36 & 39) appears to cover three aspects, t.w.

- a) a psychological ground: by excessive mourning grief is the more intensified; someone afflicted by bereavement is like a sick man whose illness should be cured and whose pain should not be doubled;
- b) a religious feature; immoderate lamentation may indicate unwillingness to resign to the divine decree;
- c) a moral aspect: making a public show of one's sorrow was a bad custom dating from pre-Islamic times, so it should be discontinued (*H.B.* II, 38).

A spiritual interpretation is given of the tradition stating: 'The souls of martyrs having ascended to Paradise abide in the crops of green birds which are perched on lanterns hanging from the Throne' (Mu. *Imâra* 121). Here the Delhi divine elucidates: 'They are birds, because they summarily reflect properties peculiar to angels in the same way as birds reflect properties peculiar to animals upon the earth. They are green because this is a colour which is delightful to see' (*H.B.* II, 172 f.).

On the other hand in his exegesis of traditions Shâh Walî Allâh also knows how to display commonsense. With reference to the prophetic statement: 'When one of you yawns during the *salât* he must restrain it as much as possible, for the devil enters through

his mouth' (Mu. *Zuhd* 59), he says: 'I declare the meaning of this is that yawning may occasion the entering of flies and the like which disturb the concentration of one's mind and create a diversion' (H.B. II,13). In explanation of Mohammed's argument that one ought to clean the nose three times if one performs ablution 'for the devil spends the night in the innermost part of one's nose' (Mu. *Tahâra* 23), he says: '(I declare:) It means that a clogged nose may cause dullness and nightmares' (H.B. I,175).

{1} See also Tafh. I,213 which reports that the Companions differed because of their different pattern of life. Among them there were soldiers, artisans and merchants who had to work for a living and 'were journeying in the land' (Qur'ân IV,101), as well as devotees and ascetics who had made themselves free from occupation.

Chapter twelve: the Sharia

Birth of the sharī`a

As soon as the point was reached in the process of creation that man's external form and properties had become manifest, special provisions were made for him: 'When the Crucial Moment, which in the Revelation is called 'the Blessed Night wherein all things are disposed in wisdom' (*Qur'ân* XLIV,3 f.) had come, a concentration of spiritual entities (consisting of laws for mankind) was generated in the World of Sovereignty (*malakût*) which is composed of the moral rules (*ahkâm*) for the human species combined with the requirements of the moment' (*H.B.* I,25). God's legislative activity is in fact the complement of His destination of things in the universe (*Sat.* 15). Legislation sees to it that man's angelic and bestial potentialities function properly and remain in a state of equilibrium so that bliss will ultimately become his share in the Hereafter. With this end in view, divine Providence prepared 1}two kinds of directives:

1. measures designed for situations, actions and ethical qualities which are not conditioned by time and place. Consequently, the *irtifâqât* (devices for further progress) were instituted, and the principles of good and evil were established, by which men are inspired in the same fashion as nature inspires bees and sparrows;
2. rules adapted to changes of time and place. For that purpose various *sharī`as* were revealed in the course of history (*Tafh.* I,239). The varieties of *sharī`as* are comparable with rainwater that comes down from heaven. When reaching the earth it is immediately affected by regional conditions on the spot. Hence, ponds in the first and the second climate (region of the terrestrial sphere) contain different kinds of water (*Tafh.* II,23). The fixation of the times for the *salât* furnishes an example of how provisions of the *sharī`a* are adapted to natural conditions. Regions with a moderate climate are kept in mind, in which day and night are of the same length and where the customary division of time is by one fourth of a day, i.e. a period of three hours (*H.B.* I,188). Equally, the customs prevalent in an area are considered: in the Islamic regulations regarding ritual food, account had been taken of what the ancient Arabs did or did not like to eat (*Khizâna* 8).

In consequence of the principle that a *sharī`a* ought to fit in with existing local practices and religious observances, the prophets, as bearers of a *sharī`a*, had to sort out what might still be usable material for the refinement of souls (*Tafh.* I,68). Abraham started by refuting astrology when he saw that the people to whom he was sent used the Ka`ba as a temple of the sun, moon and other heavenly bodies, but the building itself he left intact, and the rituals he made obligatory were more or less the same as the ways of worship to which people were accustomed in the days of paganism (*Tafh.* I,67). Similarly, the pre-Islamic

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usage of the *walîma* (wedding dinner-party) was allowed to continue because of the many beneficial contingencies it contained. Some correction had to be made in it, however. Thus the Prophet forbade the use of this institute as a means of emulation in dignity, resulting in a total dissipation of property (*H.B.* II,130). On the other hand, pre-Islamic Arabs could also suffer from excessive scrupulosity. For instance, they thought it forbidden to carry on trade during the *hajj*-period, as it would affect the pious intentions of a pilgrim. In *Qur'ân* II,198 ('No grievance can be held against you, if you seek bounty from your Lord during the pilgrimage'), this misconception of theirs was rectified (*H.B.* II,56). If a custom had to be abolished, the divine management furnished compensations so that people might not become confused. Thus the Arabs of pre-Islamic days used to throw arrows if they needed to find proper times and means for a journey, a marriage and so on. Since it was pure gambling, the Prophet had to repeal this custom. However, as a substitute Mohammed established the institute of *istikhâra*, i.e. the prayer performed with the hope of receiving divine advice and enlightenment through which people are instructed how to manage their affairs (*H.B.* II,19). In other words, according to the Delhi divine in His revelatory activities Allâh proves to be a prudent educator who adopts the rites and rules of obligatory worship to the surroundings and situation of the various tribes and regions. Accordingly, 'due to dissimilar states of affairs and distinct considerations of expediency, the legislations of prophets differed... Thus, for example God did not permit the Jews to take spoils (see Joshua, ch. VI), but He allowed us to do so (see *Qur'ân* VIII,70: 'Enjoy what you have taken as booty, such as is lawful and good'), having regard to our weak economic position (*H.B.* I,89).

The Need of a Universal Sharī`a

On the other hand, one should also realize that a mixing of institutionalized religions (*milal*) may give rise to bigotry and squabbles. In this connection Shâh Walî Allâh refers to critical observations made in *Kalîla wa-Dimna*, the well-known Indian mirror for princes. In an introduction to it the uncertainty of religions is discussed. It represents a situation that calls for a leader who has to unite quarrelsome communities into

one *milla*. To this end he ought to supply a model *sharî'a*, suitable for inhabitants of the moderate regions, for Arabs as well as non-Arabs. At the same time he should take into consideration the knowledge and standard of civilization of his own people, attaching to them more importance than to those of other nations. All the same he must induce all men to follow that model *sharî'a*, for the whole benefit of a standard legislation would be lost if it were still left to every nation separately or to leaders of every age to produce their private *sharî'as*... Consequently, when framing religious, civil and social laws, the best and easiest way for that leader is that he should reckon only with the customs of the people to whom he has been sent. The laws laid down should
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not be so rigid as to prove a hardship for those who will come later 2}, but in the manner that on the whole they might abide by them. The first believers will be drawn to the acceptance of that *sharî'a* out of inner conviction and because of its correspondence with their customs, while later generations will be attracted by the exemplary lives of leaders and caliphs of the community. Thus it will happen in a natural way to all people in every age, whether ancient or modern (*H.B.* I, 118).

Practicality of the Sharî'a

The Delhi divine disagrees with the Muslim philosophers who claim that the phrasing of *sharî'a* rules has no significance in itself and should merely serve the purpose of aiding people to understand ethical principles. This is an underestimation of the factual import of divine laws and codes. The truth is that from the standpoint of God such statutes are absolutely indispensable to ordinary people if they have to implement religion (*H.B.* I, 6 & 92). Hence, 'the divine Law itself has been revealed in the language of common folk' (*H.B.* I, 94), and the Prophet usually did not explain a deeper sense than would be implied in the commands and interdictions given.

On the other hand, Shâh Walî Allâh does not want to identify himself with the custodians of the *sharî'a* who 'content themselves with those forms'. As in so many cases the right solution appears to be to steer a middle course: An acknowledgment of the relevance of moulds and forms for divine injunctions does not release a scholar from the duty of inquiring which ideas and spirit may lie at the root of them (*H.B.* I, 92). One of the primary aims Shâh Walî Allâh had in view with his standard work *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha* is precisely to elucidate the various sound reasons for the obligations God has imposed upon His worshippers. Thus, for instance, considerations of expediency, recognizable in the rule that sand, and not another means, has been prescribed for the rite of *tayammum* (ritual purification with sand, allowed when water is unavailable), are:

- a) as a rule sand is everywhere in hand;
- b) as such it is already a cleansing agent for certain objects, like a boot, a sword;
- c) covering one's face with dust is an expression of humility and fits well with asking forgiveness (*H.B.* I, 180).

Equally, it bears testimony to the wisdom of the expounder of the *sharî'a* that he cancelled the obligation of a forenoon-*salât*, since peasants, traders and artisans usually follow their pursuits in the period between dawn and mid-day (*H.B.* I, 188). In explanation of the rationale behind the prohibition of *zinâ* (unlawful fornication), the Delhi scholar argues: 'Masculine types, like male animals, have a craving for females and brook no rival in their sexual intercourse; but unlike their fellow creatures men do not fight each other because of it... For intuitively the human being feels that such internal fights would lead to a demolition of their cities... Consequently, it is suggested that he keep to his own wife and not start a fight for 134.

the woman set aside for another. This is the very basis of the interdiction of *zinâ*' (*H.B.* I, 81). 'Because of this the science of *fiqh* is the most noble, profitable and comprehensive of all disciplines' (*Musawwâ* 4).

However, this does not alter the fact, that we still meet regulations in the Law, of which the grounds seem adventitious. An instance of this is the arbitrarily fixed minimum amount of property liable to payment of the *zakât*-tax. It is not clear why God decided this share for us instead of another amount (*H.B.* I, 130).

Nevertheless, nobody is at liberty to suspend obedience to a rule prescribed in a sound tradition on the ground that one cannot understand what the good of it might be. The Prophet, after all, has a more reliable grasp of things than we have. The reason, according to Shâh Walî Allâh, why Mohammed mostly abstained from disclosing a deeper meaning implied in commands and prohibitions lies in the circumstance that in the opinion of statesmen subjects of a nation judge the practicality of laws by their visible results, lacking the competence to form a correct conception of the motives for introducing certain rules. For the same reason the rightly guided caliphs devoted greater efforts to establishing the forms of the true religion than to their spiritual dimensions. So the saying of `Umar is handed down: 'Even when I perform the *salât*, I calculate the tributes of Bahrayn or ponder how to equip an army' (*H.B.* I, 102 f.).

Typical Traits of the Sharī`a

In God's laws of legislation and of procreation public weal outweighs private interests. The *coitus interruptus* e.g. is considered reprehensible, though not forbidden, for it is in a person's private interest to practise it with a woman captive, whereas it is not in the interests of the general community, to which continuation of posterity is vital (*H.B.* II, 134 f.).

Further, the *sharī`a* aims at the happy mean, and avoids extremes. There are, for instance, people who have a distaste for all sorts of binding up and prefer to leave their hair dishevelled; and there are people who appear entirely occupied in adorning themselves. In this matter the Prophet pursues a just middle course, when advising: 'Do the opposite of what polytheists do, let the beard grow and clip the moustache' (*H.B.* II, 191). Then, God's injunctions aim at rendering matters easy for man, and He declares: 'God means ease for you, and desires not hardship for you' (*Qur'ân* II, 185). Once the Prophet said to Abû Mûsâ and Mu`âdh b. Jabal, when he sent them to Yemen: 'Be easy with the people and do not make things difficult'... This purpose may be substantiated in various ways:

a) for the rituals no basic principle or condition should be imposed that will be hard for people. Therefore the Prophet stated on a certain occasion: 'Would I not have thought it a burden to my community, I would have prescribed brushing the teeth before every *salât*';

b) religious duties should also include habits which they can

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glory in, like the custom to keep mosques clean, the practice of perfuming oneself on Fridays, reciting the *Qur'ân* in a melodious way, calling people to prayer by someone with a nice voice, and so on;

c) being relieved of what arouses a distaste, like the leadership in prayer of a slave, or a Bedouin;

d) if anything burdensome had to be imposed, it should be administered in doses. Correspondingly, `A'isha relates: 'At first, the *sûras* XLIX till CXIV, were revealed in which mention is made only of Paradise and Hell; not until people had come in crowds towards Islam laws were enacted concerning what was forbidden and what was permitted. Had the prohibition been revealed in the beginning: 'You should not drink wine', people would have said: 'We will never cope with it!';

e) Mohammed avoided doing things on account of which people might become disconcerted. For that reason he has omitted some acts which by themselves were desirable. Thus he stated to `A'isha: 'Had your people not been pagans in the recent past, I would have torn down the Ka`ba' (*Mu. al- hajj*, 399) (*H.B.* I, 111 f.);

f) in order to facilitate things for men the Prophet could pronounce alternative decisions, like giving alternate provisions for expiation. However, in the case of alternative precepts there is always the possibility that in God's judgment one of the two alternatives is more meritorious than the other, just as an ordinance as interpreted strictly (*`azîma*) is superior to availing oneself of a dispensation (*rukhsa*) (*`lqd* 29 and 24).

Equally, a *rukhsa* in respect of the *qibla* (direction of prayer) is given to the one who in the darkness calculates it as precisely as possible (*H.B.* I, 103);

g) another inference from the principle of 'rendering easy', drawn by the Delhi reformer, is his rejection of forced hardness and excessive strictness in respect of duties prescribed by the *sharī`a*. Both attitudes, so he warns, lead to *tahrîf* ('distortion', sc. of what is intended by the injunctions). As an example of forced hardness he mentions the erroneous view of certain people that the consumption of a light meal shortly before daybreak would infringe the law of fasting, while taking a vow of celibacy is given as an instance of excessive strictness (*H.B.* I, 120). 'In avoiding forced hardness', the Delhi scholar concludes, 'and by not multiplying to excess the ways of registering the limits, the Prophet has observed a great expediency, viz. the consideration that these matters go back to circumstances which in broad outline are met in common convention (*`urf*)... In such circumstances the

Prophet has referred men to their own good sense, so that a harmonious society could be built up' (*`lqd* 41 f. and 45). To this end a judge of the *sharī`a* has to fulfil the following conditions: 'He should never have been a slave, is a male, both adult and sagacious, qualified and with a competent knowledge of juridico-human relations and of the artifices of the disputants in their litigation. He must be at the same time strict and forbearing' (*H.B.* I, 47).

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Evaluation of the Madhâhib (schools of religious laws)

By nature Shâh Walî Allâh did not favour the principle of *taqlîd* very much, i.e. being obliged to follow the legal decisions of a particular *madhhab*. In a passage in his autobiography he tells us that in the period between the death of his father and his journey to the Hijâz he felt most affinity with the jurists, found among the experts of the science of *hadîth* (*al-Juz' al-latîf* 27). In other words, at that time he was a *ghayr muqal-lid*, i.e. somebody who considered himself not bound by obedience to any of the four schools, and who was

free to seek guidance in matters of religious faith and practice from the authentic traditions. However, because of experiences with teachers belonging to different legal schools, his stay in Haramayn brought him another way of thinking. In a vision, divine guidance made it clear to him why he had a rooted dislike of *taqlîd*, and why not- withstanding he had to take heed of this institution (*Fuyûd*, 33rd Vision). In another vision he had the opportunity of asking the Prophet himself which *madhhab* should be given preference. Then he was told that all *madhhabs* are of equal value. Not a remarkable verdict in itself, as it is the dominant view of Islam that a man of sound scholarship will never give preference to one *madhhab* over another. This opinion is usually based on the saying of Mohammed that disagreement in religious matters is a blessing for the community. Yet for the Delhi savant discord in the *umma* of his days was rather a curse than otherwise. Accordingly, the argument used in that same vision for the equivalence of the four schools appears to be a different one. Here the Prophet indicates that, because all of them care for the fundamentals of Islamic legislation, they are equally valid. The Prophet proved to have no interest at all in the so-called *furû`* (the body of positive rules), derived from the *sharî`a*; and in view of this lack of interest on the part of the Prophet the divergencies between the schools are to be taken lightly (*Fuyûd*, 10th Vision). It is the 46th vision that, in the end, affords Shâh Walî Allâh a mysterious insight into the truth of the *madhhabs* and their relative value. A clear distinction is made between the Hanafî and the other schools. Whether the Hanafî or the remaining schools carry greater weight depends on the criterion applied. If we judge of them from the aspect of their relative agreement with the very purport of the statements made by the Messenger of God and his Companions, the other *madhhabs* are to be preferred. On the other hand, if all attention is concentrated upon the requirements of the time present and the taste and conditions of the non-Arabs, the Hanafî school is far preferable to the others.

A final solution is received in the 31th vision: 'Thereupon a method was revealed to me showing how I could bring the Hanafî *fiqh* into harmony with the *sunna*; and that is by selecting from the three most authoritative Hanafî scholars (sc. Abû Hanîfa, Abû Yûsuf and al-Shaybânî) the view that fits in best with the traditions'.

From works written after the *Fuyûd al-Haramayn* we can gather that the Delhi scholar became more and more fascinated by the
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working-method of al-Shâfi`î: 'The *madhhab* of al-Shâfi`î, which gets to the root of things, is among the four the most in agreement with the *sunna*. This *imâm*, in deed, quickly discovers the rationales (*ilâl*) and designations (*asbâb*) (given by the law maker for an injunction)' (*Khizâna* 10). In his survey of the causes of divergencies between the schools, Shâh Walî Allâh concludes that the *madhhab* of al-Shâfi`î appears to have at its command the most qualified lawyers capable of independent reasoning, is the best provided with qualified Qur'ân exegetes and experts of *hadîth*, is the best at verifying the statements of the founder, the strongest in distinguishing between the opinions of the founder and the points of view of his associates, and the most scrupulous when giving certain opinions and points of view preference over others (*Insâf* 77 f.). Mazhar Baqâ has established that in 70 out of 80 decisions of Abû Hanîfa, which he rejects, the Delhi prefers the view of al-Shâfi`î (Mazhar Baqâ, *Usûl-i fiqh awr Shâh Walî Allâh*, Islamabad 1973, 40).

In the meantime, year by year the conviction grew upon him that under present conditions the right course for Muslim India was 'to combine the schools of Abû Hanîfa and al-Shâfi`î into one *madhhab*. For this purpose the rules of both schools should be examined in the light prophetic traditions recorded in compilations of traditions; whatever be founded in complete conformity with them should be retained and whatever appears to be without a basis or confirmation should be discarded' (*Tafh.* I, 212)3}. In the end of his life he felt called upon to a still vaster assignment. In the preface of his last book he confesses to have been directed by the spirit of the Prophet to try to accommodate all four *madhhabs* (*Muqaddima-i Musaffâ* 3). Accordingly, his two commentaries on the *Muwatta`*, entitled *al-Musawwâ* and *al-Musaffâ*, are the concrete results of this endeavour. Mazhar Baqâ has worked out that in these two works the opinion of al-Shâfi`î is valued the highest 133 times, while Abû Hanîfa, Mâlik, and Ahmad b. Hanbal score only 21, 19, and 5 respectively (*al-Rahîm*, May 1965, 36).

Ijtihâd and Taqlîd

Shâh Walî Allâh is not exactly an adherent of the doctrine of the closure of the door of *ijtihâd* (independent reasoning concerning a legal or theological question, based on the interpretation of the Qur'ân and the custom of the Prophet): 'The simpletons of our time', so he complains, 'are totally averse from *ijtihâd*. Like she-camels, in the nose of which a piece of wood is put to guide them, they do not know whither they are going'. *Ijtihâd* is actually a *fard kifâya* (a collective duty, the fulfilment of which by a sufficient number of individuals excuses the other individuals from fulfilling it) for every epoch, since 'every age has its own countless specific problems, and cognizance of the divine decisions with respect to them is essential'

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(*Musaffâ* I,11). Qualifications required for *ijtihâd* are knowledge of the Qur'ân and *sunna* with regard to juridical and moral rules, expertise in the field of *ijmâ'*, of the conditions required 138.

for *qiyâs*, and of the mode of rational and discursive thinking. One should also have a sound knowledge of Arabic, of abrogating and abrogated verses in the Qur'ân. But for *ijtihâd* the sciences of defensive apologetics (*kalâm*) and jurisprudence are not required (*'Iqd* 9 f.).

The Delhi jurist himself claims to hold the office of a *mujtahid* within the boundaries of a *madhhab* (*F.K.* 39 f.). The occupant of this office is qualified to exercise *ijtihâd* whenever an affair comes up for which he does not find an unequivocal judgment of the founder of the *madhhab*. He has the right to elicit judgments in the same manner and by proceeding analogously the verdicts of the founder for deriving responses in new cases (*'Iqd* 17). He has acquired so much knowledge of the Qur'ân and prophetic traditions that in the case of disagreement with views of former jurists he can give preponderance to the view he thinks weightier. Though his equipment may not be as perfect as that of a *mujtahid* in the strict sense, still someone like him can harmonize the opinions of two with one another, if he knows their proofs (*H.B.* I,157).

As is mentioned above, the Delhi divine had little liking for *taqlîd*, i.e. the assumption that the work of interpretation and expansion had been exhaustively accomplished by the great jurists of the past, and accordingly the privilege of *ijtihâd* was replaced by the duty of unquestioning adoption of their legal decisions: 'I swear by God that He is too lofty and too righteous to charge men with observance of a particular law till the Day of Resurrection, and then impose it upon them as if they were blind in mind, not able to distinguish between what is true and what is baseless' (*Tafh.* I,209).

On the other hand, Shâh Walî Allâh - as a rule on preserving the just balance - has written a chapter in his *'Iqd* under the title 'Emphasis on adopting the lead of the four schools and a serious warning against with-drawing the association with them' (*'Iqd* 53).

And in another treatise he sets forth that under certain conditions a particular *madhhab* may be the only one fit to be followed strictly. Thus e.g. in India and Transoxiana, where no Shâfi'ite, Mâlikite or Hanbalite jurists are available, an unlettered person is bound to conform to the rules of the Hanafite school, having no other choice (*Insâf* 70). And in the *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha* (I. 154) he even goes to the point of contending that it is a boon to the *umma* of his days when a consensus appears to exist concerning the lawfulness of *taqlîd*. At the same time Shâh Walî Allâh is able to formulate reasons why it might even be very expedient to rely on the statutes of only one *madhhab*. They are:

1. the agreement of the *umma* that for the knowledge of the *sharî'a* people need the support of the ancestors;
2. the prophetic command: 'Conform yourselves to the collective body of the Muslims';
3. since the ages which were memorable for blessedness are past, people must be withhold from trusting in evil *'ulamâ'* who follow their private heretic tendencies (*'Iqd* 54-7). 139.

Still limits to the allegiance are required. *Taqlîd* is correct only as long as the *mujtahid*, in whom one puts his trust, issues decisions that are in agreement with the *sunna*. *Taqlîd* is naturally unjustifiable if one assumes a legal scholar to be such a perfect expert that he never can fail (*'Iqd* 121 ff.). After all, every *ijtihâd* of each *mujtahid*, even though he be a Companion of the Prophet, may be liable to error (*Izâla* I,19).

Ijmâ' and Qiyâs

In the mind of Shâh Walî Allâh only a very limited period of existence is to be allotted to the factual functioning of *ijmâ'*, i.e. the consensus of opinion among *mujtahids* on a regulation imposed by God: 'On issues, which had remained unsolved in the time of the Prophet and Abû Bakr, an *ijmâ'* was reached during the days of `Umar; whatever has been left unsettled by `Umar will continue to be controversial till the Day of Judgment, and no conformity about it can ever be reached' (*Qurrat* 59f.). In a later work Shâh Walî Allâh extends the period up to and inclusive the caliphate of `Uthmân (*Izâla* I,283). It is unimaginable that in later epochs all the legists dispersed over the whole Muslim world could assemble simultaneously in order to fix a *communis opinio* on legal questions. At the most we can claim that before the establishment of *madhhabs* we still may have to do with an implicitly understood (*sukûti*) *ijmâ'*. Accordingly, the Delhi scholar refuses to endorse the generally accepted interpretation of Mohammed's saying: 'My community will never agree upon an error' as implying a confirmation of the validity of perpetual *ijmâ'*-activities. In his opinion these words merely indicate that there will always be a group of people in the *umma* who will maintain the command of God (*Izâla* I,113 & 118; *Tafh.* II,118): 'They are the divine Proofs (*hujjat Allâh*) on earth, though they may be small in number' (*Insâf* 92). '*Ijmâ'* does not mean', so Shâh Walî Allâh warns in another place, 'that each individual is entitled to produce a *ra'y* (personal opinion) by means of his own reflection which turns out to be based on an expediency of the time instead of on the sacred Law of Islam' (*Izâla* I,56).

As for the method of *qiyâs* (judicial reasoning by analogy), Shâh Walî Allâh makes a distinction between the

procedure pursued by the Prophet and the more restricted possibilities the legists of the community have at their disposal: 'When God had revealed to His Prophet a statute of the *sharīʿa* and had demonstrated the good reason of it, the latter was qualified to operate with the salutary purpose (*maslaha*) (set out to him), and to take the *maslaha* as the rationale (*illa*) and pivot of the statute. This was the *qiyās* practised by the Prophet. But the *qiyās* left to the *umma* is to find out the rationale underlying a statute, and to take that as its pivot' (H.B. I, 108). The *qiyās* of its learned scholars, however, is not valid for a showing up of a *maslaha* (H.B. I, 130). The most essential reason why, according to the Delhi scholar, the notion of *maslaha* must be kept out of the hand of Muslim jurists, is that it does not constitute the chief element of laws. By *maslaha* is to be understood information about

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character-building, offered by the divine Lawgiver and realizable through the acquirement of ethical qualities (like e.g. sagacity and bravery) that are beneficial in this world and the next. The principles of good and evil, which the Lawgiver laid down to this end, are as such not supplemented with fixed quantities (*maqâdîr*), nor with specific restrictive ordinances. It comprehends the refinement of the soul through the acquisition of the four virtues, t.w. purity, humility, munificence, and justice.

However, along with the appearance of Messengers of God knowledge of *farâ'id* (obligatory religious duties), systems of law, and restrictive ordinances were introduced. By means of *maqâdîr* instantiations (*mazânn*)⁴ as well as precise and well-known marks were laid down for *maslahas* (salutary purposes). Apparently, divine wisdom thought it more relevant to provide the common folk, who do not feel happy with abstract reasonings, with concrete injunctions than to leave them with general ethical lines of conduct which they themselves would have to work out (H.B. I, 129 f.). Besides, the number of specific rules imposed is so great that it becomes impossible for the masses to comply with all the requirements of good upbringing and most excellent standards, because this would be imposing something impossible for those who are charged with all kinds of jobs. Here the legal concept of *illa* can bring relief. *Illā* denotes the most proximate reason and rationale for a ruling (*hukm*). Thus e.g. kindling of evil acts is the *illa* for the *hukm* that it is prohibited to drink alcohol.

For the establishment of an *illa* it is necessary to take the clearest possible evidence and definition as criterions of its practicality. An instance of this is the permission to shorten the *salât* or to break the fast in case of a journey or an illness. Analogous rationales that could have been chosen are, for instance, connected with such strenuous trades as agriculture or blacksmithing, but their evidence is less clear, so that the divine order would be disturbed if they were regarded as an *illa* to break the fast. Trades like these are means of subsistence on which people depend for their survival. Equally, heat and cold are no suitable rationales, since it is difficult to determine which temperature ought to be taken as standard. 'Consequently, only those easily ascertainable cases have been taken into account that were generally accepted as being excusable hardships in the early period of the *umma*, to wit a journey and an illness' (H.B. I, 94 f.). As it is correct to apply *qiyās* by means of an *illa*, it is permitted to perform the *salât* seated, if during a voyage somebody suffers from seasickness. A concomitant *maslaha*, on the contrary, can never serve as substitute of an *illa*. The person who omits one of the prescribed *salâts* commits a sin, even if at that time he is occupied with the recitation of a *dhikr* or other acts of worship. He who drinks wine with the intention of medical use is notwithstanding sinning (H.B. I, 130).

In short, jurists hold an individual opinion (*ra'y*) if they take the expected occurrence of harm or expediency as the rationale of a ruling (*Insâf* 29). Actually, people fascinated by the niceties

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of *ra'y* are not Sunnites at all (*Khizâna* 10), for *ra'y* in connection with the *sharīʿa* leads to *tahrîf* (falsification of a text) (*Tafh.* I, 40; II, 133). Hence the prophetic verdict: 'He who inserts in our religion something that is foreign to it, is to be repulsed' (Bu. *I'tisâm* 3) also has a bearing on anybody who makes use of *istihsân* (advancing an arbitrary personal opinion not founded on logical reasoning for reasons of public convenience) (H.B. I, 169)5}.

{1} i.e. 'in the space lying between the hajar al-bahts of the mala a`lâ and the tajallî a`zam, the forms of the sharīʿas were prefigured' (Qurrat 328).

{2} Hence the Prophet urged the people not to inquire after all kinds of legal details so that specific aspects could be kept to a minimum and later generations might not feel troubled by rules which did no longer meet the requirements of the age (H.B. I, 91).

{3} This passage in the *Tafhîmât* is quoted by the Pakistani divine Abu'l-`Alâ' Mawdûdî in his monograph *Tajdîd wa ihyâ-i dîn* (Lahore 1963), 107. The logical inference that Shâh Walî Allâh was apparently not

adverse to talfiq (jurisprudential harmonization) has moved the Turkish divine Hûseyn Hilmi Isik to great indignation: 'Upon reading these lines in Mawdûdî's book, a moslem who knows his religion and sect gets infuriated. In truth, we cannot believe that shah Veliyyullah would think so ignorantly and so indecently' (The Religion Reformers in Islam, Istanbul 1970, 211).

{4} 'The mazânn take the place of the principles of righteousness and sin; they are their embodiments and perceptible counterparts' (H.B. I, 92).

{5} Here again Shâh Walî Allâh underlines a favourite idea of al-Shâfi'î: He who engages himself in istihsân, the latter declares indignantly, wants to become a lawgiver (Insâf 29). Istihsân is a principle in particular adhered to by the Hanafites.

Chapter thirteen: True and False Religion

The essential text for the establishment of what is to be qualified as 'true religion', is the Qur'ânic verse which states that pure faith stands for what is consonant with man's inherent nature (*fitra*) created in him by God (*Qur'ân* XXX,29). The very mainstay of an upright worshipper is his *fitra*, for he knows that his Lord has deposited in it true knowledge and genuine consciousness of God (*B.B.* 99). 'Anyone who denies the knowledge which God has put in man's inherent nature and on which the imposition of religious duties is based, is a zendik' (*Maktûb*, 9 f.). 'The worst misfortune of man is to become a materialist (*dahrî*)' (*H.B.* I,79). 'The *fitra* virtually amounts to the *dîn* (archetypal religion) which does not change with the current circumstances 1} and on which all of the prophets are in agreement' (*H.B.* I,25). Thus there is a concurrence of opinion among the prophets that no copartners should be attributed to God in man's worship and seeking of aid; that He predetermines all events before He creates them; that Resurrection, Paradise and Hell are realities (i.e. not mere symbols). Equally, there is unanimity on all sorts of rituals, matrimonial affairs, matters of social justice, opposition to the enemies of God and the application of tireless zeal to missionary work. Divergency of views only exists with respect to details of rites and statutes. Thus, for instance, according to the law of Moses one should turn one's face toward the temple of Jerusalem during the *salât*, whereas the law of our Prophet enjoins that this be done in the direction of the Ka'ba. The law of Moses ordains all committers of illegal intercourse to be stoned to death; the *sharî'a* of Mohammed, however, restricts this punishment only to an adulterous *muhsan* (a free person who has concluded a valid marriage); for others the infliction of lashes will suffice. Differences in legislation were usually due to the divergent situations prophets were faced with. Accordingly, God made booty unlawful for the Jews (see Joshua VI,18 f.), but declared it legally permissible to us in view of our weak economic position (see *Qur'ân* VIII,69) (*H.B.* I,86- 9).

A difference in rules could also arise from considerations of expediency (*masâlih*) which had to be observed in consideration of the diversity of people's dispositions. Hence the Friday was instituted as a special day for the Arabs because of their being illiterate and uneducated. For the Jews, who were enlightened enough to understand dogmatic grounds, the Sabbath was made compulsory because of the tenet that God rested on this day from His work of creation (*H.B.* I,89). Apart from that, the Prophet himself had an aversion to theorizing, and used to say: 'People before you were ruined because of their profusion of inquiries and disputations' (*Mu. 'Ilm* 2) (*H.B.* I,91).

Although man is endowed with a religious nature, he usually

appears unable to acquire the means of seeking proximity to God (*iqtibârât*) on his own. Consequently, 'it became incumbent on God's grace and care for the human race to establish institutionalized religions (*milal*)' (*B.B.* 181). In the course of time, however, new actions on the part of God became imperative. People, separated from each other through differing rites and institutions of their particular religion, began to vilify each other and to make war on one another. So the truth was hidden. In such conditions there is an urgent need for a rightly guided leader (*imâm rashîd*) who will deal with the dissentient religious communities 'as an intelligent caliph deals with oppressive kings'. In fine, now the hour has struck for the arrival of a religion to abolish all other religions. Requisite to the success of such a religion which renders any other religion redundant, is the establishment of a *sharî'a* that can supply the necessary material for an in-born religion (*madhhab tabî'î*) suitable for occupants of moderate climatic zones, whether Arab or non-Arab. Moreover, the *imâm* who introduces this religion 'should take into consideration the knowledge and the standard of civilization of his own people and should give them more importance than those of other nations... Consequently, when framing religious, civil and social laws, the best and easiest way for this *imâm* is to reckon only with the customs of the people to whom he has been sent (*H.B.* I,118). 'God', so Shâh Walî Allâh sets forth in another writing, 'wanted to reform the Arabs through the agency of the Prophet and the remaining parts of the earth through the agency of the Arabs. Accordingly, it was necessary that the rules of the *sharî'a* were adapted to the customs and habits of the Arabs' (*F.K.* 48).

Should the *imâm* have to control a community of which its members do not yet as a whole adhere to this exemplary religion, the Delhi divine, deems it expedient to divide the subjects into the following three categories:

1. those who are both outwardly and inwardly obedient to the prescriptions of the archetypal religion (*dîn*);
2. those who willy-nilly are obedient to the *imâm* and powerless to rebel;
3. despicable infidels (*kâfirs*) whom the *imâm* will employ for harvesting, threshing grain and similar work, like beasts are employed for ploughing and carrying burdens. The *imâm* should prevent members of other religions from performing their rites in public. In addition, infidels should not receive the same treatment

as Muslims in matters as retaliation (*qisâs*), blood- money (*diyât*), matrimonial affairs and participation in leadership positions, in order that this will drive these others to embrace Islam 2} (*H.B.* I,119).

By the persons of the second category are undoubtedly meant the so-called *munâfiqûn* ('hypocrites'). Shâh Walî Allâh distinguishes two main groups:

1. Those who profess the creed with their tongues but in their hearts are happy with *kufr* (infidelity). The Qur'ânic verdict: 'They shall be in the lowest stage of the fire of Hell' (*Qur'ân* 144.

IV,145) refers to them.

2. Those who are lukewarm in their Muslim faith. To them belong:

a) the people who always adapt themselves to the customs of their environment: If they live among Muslims, they become Muslim, and if they find themselves amidst infidels, they become infidels;

b) those whose minds are so much taken up with worldly pleasures that no scope is left for love of God and His Messenger;

c) those who are so wrapped up in acquiring the necessities of life that they have no time to pay attention to the Hereafter;

d) those who have misconceptions and doubts about the mission of our Prophet, although they still do not remove the yoke of Islam from their necks. Grounds for their doubts regard aspects as: the Prophet's appearing to be subjected to the laws of human existence as anybody else, the fact that the establishment of the religion of Islam had come about through wars of conquest, and so on. Among them also can be counted contemporary scholars of the rational science having their hearts filled with mistrusts, as e.g. with respect to the reality of the life to come;

e) people who, out of exclusive affection to the members of their own clan, render assistance only to them, to the detriment of other Muslims and the cause of Islam³.

The first group of *munâfiqûn* commit the *nifâq* (dissimulation) of faith; they are fated to Hell. The people of the second group are guilty of *nifâq* of conduct or morals (*F.37 ff.*). Only for a time they are punished with infernal torments. Thereafter they

enter Paradise (*Khizâna* 10). The Delhi divine distinguishes the infidels into four categories: 1.

Star-worshippers who are of the opinion that... worshipping the stars would be beneficial in this world, and that raising pressing needs to them is legitimate (*H.B.* I,59).

2. Worshippers of saints. 'Anyone who goes to the tomb of Mu`în al-Dîn Hasan in Ajmer, or the shrine of Sâlâr Mas`ûd Ghâzî in Bahrâ'ich in order to get an urgent desire gratified commits a sin graver than murder or adultery. Nay, it is equivalent to infidelity (*kufr*). People's worship of their living shaykhs, or of their shrines if they are dead, is one of the worst diseases of our time. The foolish blindly follow the example of the Hindu infidels who worship idols. What people have devised in the matter of shrines, taking them as grounds where *melas* (fairs) are held, belongs to the worst heresies' (*Tafh.* II,45,63 f.).

3. Polytheists. Their basic error is that they adhere to certain holy persons and angels whom they believe to be intermediaries of God and the

very fulfillers of their needs. Yet, they do not attribute copartners to God in respect of the creation of, for instance, the prime elements (*jawâhir*). Equally, they leave the management of major affairs in charge of God only. Further they believe that if God has settled a matter, nobody can prevent it. 4. Jews and Christians. The Christians make the fundamental mistake of endowing Jesus with a property not shared by anyone else, to wit his being created by God without a natural cause... Similarly, `Uzayr (Ezra) is held by the Jews to be without

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equal, i.e. to be a son of God in a literal sense (*Qur'ân* IX,30). This is totally wrong; it is simply a metaphor. And in former times the term 'son' could mean 'the beloved one', 'the favoured one' or 'the chosen one' as can also be construed from the context of the New Testament (*F.K.* 33). However, by calling Jesus 'the son of God' the Christians believe that he is higher than other created beings and that for this reason he should not be called a 'servant' or considered equal to another person (*H.B.* I,59)⁴. The Jews believe in the Torah. Their error, however, is that they temper with the text (*tahrîf*), in respect of the language, as well as of the meaning of the Torah; on the one hand hiding verses of it, on the other adding self-devised ones to it. They are not very painstaking if it regards a putting its laws in execution. They suffer a lot from religious bigotry, denying the mission of Mohammed (*F.K.* 16 & 24). On the other hand, Jews and Christians who lived before the public appearance of the Prophet are to be ranged with the better-class *munâfiqûn* who do not belong to the damned but will enter Paradise after undergoing a period of punishment. This inference can be deduced from the Qur'anic statement: 'We are not to chastise a people until⁵ We send forth a

Messenger to them' (*Qur'ân* XVII,15) (*Khizâna* 10).

Imân (mental comprehension of God) is the quality characteristic of the first category of subjects mentioned above (viz. the people who are both outwardly and inwardly obedient to the *dîn*). The essence and aim of *imân* is spiritual perfection (*ihân*), because of which man becomes an integrated personality: 'He who strives for spiritual perfection... should devote himself to meditation on the World of divine Essence (*lâhût*)... Thus the worshipper comes to the state of seeing God from a distance... (As a result), God's light and Cloud of Glory (*sakîna*) come upon him' (*B.B.* 112 f.)

Shâh Walî Allâh distinguishes three levels of *ihân*. The first one is for men busy with occupations such as crafts, soldiering, and scholarship. This form of *ihân* is connected with devotions like *du'âs* (personal invocations) and *dhikrs* (in which certain fixed phrases are repeated again and again in order to induce a state of inner serenity, of spiritual concentration on God). The second level is for men who desire to walk in the path of Truth. Here the rituals to be performed include fasting, passing the night awake, and recitations spoken aloud. The third level is for him who desires to acquire *fanâ* and *baqâ*. So he is guided to *yâd-dâsh* (constant concentration on the reality of the Self-existent, completely stripped of words and imagination). By applying himself to it with perseverance he is eventually coloured with the colour of Divinity (*Tafh.* I, 86 f.).

Speaking generally, two distinct kinds of faith can be recognized:

1. Faith bearing on conditions relevant to life in this world such as the protection of life and property. Its antonym is *kufr* (infidelity). Its pillar is formal obedience. So the Prophet stated: 'He who eats from ritually slaughtered animals, performs his *salât* and turns his face towards

the Ka'ba as we do, is a Muslim who has the protection of God and His Messenger. You should, therefore, not behave unfaithfully to God Who is responsible for your safety' (Bu. *Salât* 28).

2. Faith bearing on conditions relevant to the Hereafter such as rescue from Hell and the attainment of ranks in Paradise. Its antonym is *nifâq* (hypocrisy). Its pillar is every true expression of belief, every laudable act and every virtuous habit. Only in this case do we have to do with faith in the proper sense of the word, and it is this which can increase and decrease (*B.B.* 202; *Tafh.* II, 63).

Down to the present day Indian Sunnî Muslims have difficulty in considering Shî'îs be adherents of the same faith. A *salât* of a Sunnî performed under the direction of a Shî'î is not valid and has to be done again. If a Sunnî has given his daughter in marriage to a Shî'î, he should not figure as leader of the official prayer rituals.

In the days of Shâh Walî Allâh the Sunnî-Shî'a conflicts constituted a constant threat to the stability of the Indian Muslim society. It is, therefore, quite natural that this apostle of unity set himself the task of entering into the disputes of the two parties.

One of the most important points of controversy is the individual merit to be assigned to the four 'rightly guided' caliphs. Two major works of the Delhi scholar deal with this. The mere fact that both works are written in Persian and not in Arabic, already indicates that they were chiefly intended for the particular situation at home. This is corroborated by what we read in their introductions. In the *Qurrat al-`aynayn bi tafdîl al-shaykhayn* the author begins by remarking that he wrote the work at the instance of his beloved pupil Khwâja Muhammad Amîn al-Kashmîrî in order to remove the doubts of people confounded by 'the lustre of heretical views'. In the opening sentence of the *Izâlat al-khafâ' `an khilâfat al-khulafâ'* he states: 'I declare that in our days the heresy of Shî'a becomes more and more manifest... and many people in this country are uncertain as to the affirmation of the caliphate of the four rightly guided caliphs. The light of divine guidance, however, made me understand that undoubtedly the recognition of the dignity of their office is correct.

The line of argument of the *Qurrat al-`aynayn*, finished about 1740, is that during the reign of the first two caliphs the spiritual atmosphere (*nisba*) prevailing at the time of Mohammed continued, and expired with their death. Consequently, Abû Bakr and `Umar walked in the path of prophethood. The caliphate of `Alî inaugurated the era of saintliness and since saints are inferior to prophets, `Alî ranked below his predecessors. This is of course a straight refutation of the Shî'îs who unanimously regard `Alî as the most excellent exponent of the community after Mohammed.

Twenty years later, that is to say towards the end of his life, Shâh Walî Allâh wrote his *Izâlat al-khafâ'*. It is a more

general and at the same time very exhaustive disquisition on the institute of the caliphate, but the views expounded in it hardly differ from the thoughts set out in the *Qurrat al-`aynayn*. Nonetheless, the Delhi

author has not always been so confident of his standpoint in this matter. In the *Fuyûd al-Haramayn*, an early book dating from about 1733, he confesses that if it were to obey his inner impulse, he would surely assign a higher rank to `Alî, as his affection for him was still greater than the three other rightly guided caliphs (*Fuyûd*, 33rd Vision). He renders the following report of a dream in which he is granted the opportunity to interview Mohammed in person: 'I asked the Prophet about the actual reason why Abû Bakr and `Umar are to be judged more excellent than `Alî, although the latter be of a higher descent, more advanced in sagacity and more stouthearted than the other two, so that the majority of the sûfis try to trace their spiritual lineage to him'. Then the Prophet made it clear to him that the superiority which stems from the completion of the prophetic mission and which is characteristic of the first two caliphs⁶, is universal; such in contradiction to sublimity connected with saintliness peculiar to `Alî which is 'partial', i.e. of a lower standard (*Tafh.* I, 246, *Qurrat* 331, *Fuyûd*, 22nd Vision).

Besides the visions granted in al-Haramayn, Shâh Walî Allâh received additional mystical experiences that supplied information about the order of merit of the four great men. 'After we had contacted the *hazîra al-quds* which is the rallying-point of the spiritual concentrations (*himam*) of most excellent people, we found the perfection of the souls of Abû Bakr and `Umar to be different from that of `Alî. The rays of the souls of those two shaykhs were like those of a most glaring torch and they were intermingled with the rays of the Prophet's soul... We established simultaneously that the light of `Alî's soul in its relation to the Prophet is comparable to the light of the moon that owes its origin to its facing the sun' (*Qurrat* 330 f.; *Tafh.* I, 244 f.).

It is not difficult for Shâh Walî Allâh to prove that this knowledge about a spiritual origin of the first caliphs accords with Qur'ânic teaching. The divine statement: 'He will surely establish their religion for them' (*Qur'ân* XXIV, 55), being 'a prophecy of the reign of the first caliphs', shows that the Twelver Shî'îs are amiss if they assume that an approved religion has to be continuously concealed, and that the *imâms* of the family of the Prophet should constantly practise *taqiyya* (i.e. dissimulate their religion and hide their religious rituals from their opponents). The same inference can be made from the verse: 'that He may make the religion of truth victorious over every other religion' (*Qur'ân* IX, 33). In conformity with divine wisdom this promise was not yet fulfilled at the time of Mohammed. Hence caliphs have been appointed for its realization (*Izâlat al-khafâ'* I, 20).

On other occasions as well, the opinion of the Prophet is asked for the evaluation of Shî'î tenets: 'I inquired from the *rûh*

148. (spirit) of the Prophet what the latter thought of the Shî'a which prides itself on showing deep affection towards the family of the Prophet and casting aspersions on the Companions. By means of spiritual speech it intimated that their way of thinking (*madhhab*) is without foundation and that the baselessness of their creed discloses itself in the conception of *imâm*. If you investigate this, you will discover that in their line of thought an *imâm* is infallible, to be obeyed unquestioningly; he has been appointed for the whole of mankind and receives esoteric revelations; in other words, that he is a prophet or something similar. In fact, the Shî'a denies the doctrine of Mohammed's being the 'seal of the prophets' (*Tafh.* II, 244 & 250; *Intibâh* I, 8 f.).

Yet, on closer examination it turns out that in his appraisal of the Shî'a the Delhi savant prefers to keep a balance. To counterpoise the voiced disapproval of the Shî'a as such, a sincere regard is shown for the twelve *imâms*: 'I saw (during a retreat in a mosque in one of the last ten days of Ramadân) the spirits of the *imâms* originating from the family of the Prophet in the *hazîra al-quds* with a most sublime face and a most beautiful shape. I understood it to be very risky to repudiate them or to be ill-disposed towards them' (*Tafh.* I, 107). 'I have come to recognize that the twelve *imâms* are *qutbs* (heads in the hierarchy of saints) of one and the same genealogical tree, and that in the course of their successions mystic practice spread about' (*Tafh.* II, 245).

What is more, Shâh Walî Allâh's view on the way rightly guided caliphs had to be elected, proves scuriously enough to be more in consonance with Shî'î teachings than with Sunnî opinions: 'Men', so he argues, 'are by nature inclined to follow their lusts and in them Satan flows like their blood. If, therefore, a caliph were to be elected by human *ra'y* (opinion) (i.e. by the people themselves), it may well be that an unjust caliph, who does not care for the objectives of the caliphate, is chosen... So the institution of a perfect caliphate requires that it is occupied by a wholly reliable caliph who is appointed by designation and hints (*ishârât*) of the Prophet' (*Izâlat al-khafâ'* I, 10). Again it is in conformity with the faith of the Twelver Shî'a but at variance with Sunnî persuasion when the Delhi divine claims a caliph to be immune to sin (*Izâlat al-khafâ'* I, 264). The emphasis he places upon *taklîf* (state of accountability) (*H.B.* I, 19 - 25) is surely more in line with Shî'î principles than with Sunnî views. And it is in accord with Ismâ'îlî tenets when he states that he himself had been nominated as the *nâtiq* ('speaking' prophet who reveals a new religious law) and a *wasî* (legal guardian) of his generation, and that only legal guardians can be credited with a wholly reliable interpretation of the *sharî'a*, for 'knowledge of the *sharî'a* from the breast of the Messenger of God falls to their share' (*Tafh.* II, 135).

Another concept Shâh Walî Allâh had in common with Ismâ`îlîs was his obstinate belief in progress till the end of history. Thus al-Kirmânî (d. 1021) speaks in his work on metaphysical speculation *Kitâb al-Riyâd* of the superiority of his own age over the past (cf. pp. 58 f. in H. 149. Corbin's edition of Nâsir-i Khusraw's *Jâmi` al- hikmatayn*, Teheran 1953).

{1} In al-Budûr al-bâzigha Shâh Walî Allâh speaks of a universal religion preserved in the World of Prefiguration. From this universal religion particular religions, adapted to the conditions of the time, are continuously pouring out upon a given collective body of men. In addition, God sees to it that the forms of the particular religions are suited to the varying capacities of the individual believers (B.B. 185).

2} In other words, the proselytization programme of Shâh Walî Allâh only includes the leaders of the Hindu community, and not the low class of the infidels, indispensable and exploitable as they were as subordinate agricultural employees, while their miserable living conditions could at the same time afford a useful and striking illustration of the eminence of Islam (H.B. II, 154). {3} In another writing those who are engrossed in poetry or mathematics to such an extent that they cannot make sufficient study of the sharî`a are also reckoned among the munâfiqûn (A.Q. 63).

{4} For the Christian doctrine of the Trinity Shâh Walî Allâh manages to furnish an ingenious mystical interpretation. Just as a mystic perceives in himself a luminous point, to wit the hajar al-baht, Jesus discovered in himself three components: a nafs nâtiqa which has a correlation with the nafs kulliyya, a rûh samawî which has a connexion with the tajallî a`zam and a hajar al-baht which has a relationship with the dhât baht. On the analogy of this, Christian divines deduced three persons: one called 'Father' representing the central core of the essence of God (dhât), the second called 'Son' being tantamount to the nafs

kulliyya, and a third called 'Holy Ghost', i.e. equivalent to the tajallî a`zam (A.Q. 120 f.).

{5} I.e. so Shâh Walî Allâh deduces, as soon as Mohammed had devulged his religion, 'it was made obligatory for all people who strive after being consistent with God's will and approval. This implies that, even on the assumption that a Jew or a Christian wants to adhere to the original and true religion without adding anything to it, it is - although an entering into the religion brought by Mohammed and an acknowledgment of his gift of prophecy would not be required for their perfection and proximity to God - nevertheless necessary for another reason. The fact is that with the introduction of the true and original religion by the intermediary of Mohammed in the fourth stage of socio-economic development, it was God's intent to deem turning away from it a deed of disobedience and opposition... Consequently, since that moment God's approval and acclaim depend on the obedience to the religion brought by

Mohammed and the frank avowal of his gift of prophecy' (B.B. 199f) {6} It is certainly not without significance, Shâh Walî Allâh observes in the same passage, that Abû Bakr and `Umar are buried in the neighbourhood of the Prophet.

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Chapter fourteen: religious rites and customs

Sha`â'ir

According to Shâh Walî Allâh, the term *sha`â'ir* (visible symbols) must be taken to mean 'tangible and concrete entities serving for the worship of God' (H.B. I, 69). They are adapted to generally accepted views, to what is obvious for everybody and to what the heart can trust implicitly (*Fuyûd*, 4th Vision): 'God directives are founded firstly on the easiest thing and then on what is even more easy' (H.B. I, 70).

'The four most important *sha`â'ir* are the Qur'ân, the Ka`ba, the Prophet and the *salât*... Part of a respectful treatment of the

Qur'ân is that people listen closely when its verses are recited..., and only touch it after having performed a ritual ablution... Part of a respectful treatment of the Ka`ba is that people may only circumambulate it in a state of ritual purity, ... and that they should keep their face averted from it and turn their back on it when they satisfy a call of nature ... Part of a respectful treatment of the Prophet is the obligation to obey him, to invoke blessings upon him, and to refrain from speaking to him in a loud voice ... The aim of the *salât* is to arouse people to the consciousness that before God they are in the same position as servants in front of their kings' (H.B. I, 70).

Salât

In the view of the Delhi divine, excellencies to be attributed to the *salât* are 'that of all ways of worship it is the one which is the most important, the best demonstrable, the most widely known and the most profitable' (H.B. I, 168). So it may relieve needs. 'Accordingly, the prayer for the petitioning of rain has been instituted; and a special *salât* has been introduced to remove fear of an eclipse of celestial bodies as well as one whereby a decision is sought with the help of divine inspiration (*istikhârâ*)' (B.B. 211). Besides, 'there is nothing better than the *salât* for training the lower soul to make the physical nature tractable and obedient to man's reason' (H.B. I, 73), being 'a salutary antidote that counteracts the effects of all poisons injurious to spiritual health' (B.B. 199). For 'the goal of all acts of obedience (to which also the *salât* belongs) is to direct the rational soul to God and to empty it from mean things ... Since (as you know) the limbs obey the *khayâl* (form which is imaged in the mind), the *khayâl* in its turn obeys the *wahm* (power of abstraction), and the *wahm* obeys the rational soul. Therefore God prescribed acts of obedience for the limbs in order that from there light would be transferred to the rational soul and concentration upon God would thus become a mental attitude of it' (Tafh. II, 46). In addition, prayer results in expiation of sins as well as enjoying the company of beautiful damsels in the Hereafter (*Khizâna* 9). Further, it belongs to the seemingly attitudes 151. (*tamâthîl*) to be assumed towards the divine Names *al-hayy al-qayyûm* (the Living and the Self-subsisting) (Tafh. II, 114): 'Prostrating oneself in prayer is the most extreme expression of respect¹. Consequently, the *salât* is the *mi'râj* (ascension) of the believer and the moment at which his angelic disposition becomes liberated from the chains of his animal nature' (H.B. II, 11). 'In truth, the *alât* has been imposed as the pivot of actions which bring one close to God, rather than as a means for reflection on the majesty of God ..., because proper reflection is only attained by high-minded people; and how few they are' (H.B. I, 73).

For the ultimate fixation of the times of prayer various aspects had to be kept in mind. In its preparatory stage the following considerations were taken into account; 'Since the benefit of *salât* consists in plunging into the depths of eye-witnessing the divine world and entering into the ranks of angels ..., there is no more opportune time for it than the four hours of a day in which an influx of spirituality is noticeable, angels descend, the deeds of men are presented to God and their personal invocations are answered'. These auspicious hours are to be found in the early morning, at the setting of the sun, at the beginning of the night and at midnight. It is, however, apparent that the majority of people cannot be charged with the obligation of a *salât* at midnight, this being too inconvenient a time for them. Hence, only the first three periods were originally intended by God to serve for the performance of a *salât* as can be deduced from His word: 'Perform the prayer at the sinking of the sun (i.e. the sunset prayer) to the darkening of the night (i.e. the last evening prayer) and the morning prayer' (*Qur'ân* XVII, 78). Another point to be kept in view, so the Delhi savant continues, is that 'it is neither proper to have too long an interval between two prayers, so that the spiritual effect of the previous prayer gets lost, nor should the interval be too short, so that people have insufficient time to make a living. Times had to be fixed which could be easily observable for high and low, for Arabs and non-Arabs. This is only feasible if a fourth part of a day, i.e. three hours, is taken as a basic unit' (H.B. I, 187 f.). In consequence of this the number of *salâts* became six in toto, to wit the morning prayer, forenoon prayer, midday prayer, afternoon prayer, prayer at sunset, and an evening prayer which follows after a fourth part of the night or something similar. Recognizing that peasants, merchants and artisans are from dawn to midday continually engaged in their main activities, Mohammed repealed the obligatory performance of the forenoon prayer (B.B. 209; H.B. I, 188).

Similarly, the length of time chosen for a *salât* should serve the purpose aimed at by the ritual as such: 'It should be neither too short, so that its intention is not realized, nor too long, so that the performance of it is too difficult for the people given all the actions they have to go through. In total an uneven number of *rak'as* (bendings of the torso from an upright position, followed by two prostrations) should be made in a day, for uneven numbers are judged to be auspicious' (B.B. 210). Due regard should also be paid to one's conduct: 'It is obligatory to refrain from

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talking ... and it is detestable to copy during the ritual the behaviour of animals, which is incompatible with the dignity characteristic of man, such as sprawling on the ground as predatory animals do, pecking as a cock does, or crouching down in the manner of camels; all of these are acts which are inconsistent with humility and decorum' (B.B. 210 f.). In respect of the tricky questions whether or not one has to say *amîn* loudly after the *Fâtiha*, and whether or not one ought to raise the hands to the ears or the shoulders at the time of bowing, the Delhi divine discreetly declares that in either case arguments can be put forward. Yet, at the same time he cannot resist remarking that in the traditions the raising of hands as such is more often recorded and corroborated (H.B. II, 9 f.). And in some instances he appears to be in flat contravention of the Hanafî, the school favourite in the Indian subcontinent, by virtue of a tradition or on the basis of his own findings, such as with regard to the recitation of the *Fâtiha* behind the *imâm* and the *salât* over a dead

person (*Anfâs* 24).

The rationale of the communal prayer on Friday, according to Shâh Walî Allâh, is that in this way the *salât*, being one of the most fundamental *sha`â'ir* of God is publicized: 'One day in the week is fixed for it, being a proper interval observed by all communities of the original and true religion. We, however, have preference over the other two communities (sc. the Jews and Christians), for we shall precede them on the Day of Resurrection because of our day of worship², though we were later in establishing an institutionalized religion (*milla*)' (*B.B.* 212). Nevertheless, ritual notions of the other communities may occasionally cause some embarrassment. Muslim *faqîhs* all agree that, as a rule, no *wudû'* is necessary after having eaten food prepared by means of a fire; and if a tradition recommends it, it is said to have been repealed. Yet, in this connection camel's meat remains a moot question, since there is no statement available about a repeal of this rite after the consumption of roasted camel's meat. So there are some jurists such as, for instance, Ahmad b. Hanbal and Ishâq b. Râhwayh who deem it required. These advocates, as the Delhi scholar explains, are troubled by the knowledge that the Israelite prophets were unanimous in their view that camel's meat is taboo. Hence they consider *wudû'* a relief to people, to whom it is still a trial to eat something that had been forbidden in the Torah, and a happy device to express thankfulness to the Lord for permitting the same to Muslims (*H.B.* I, 177).

Zakât

To establish the expediency of this institute Shâh Walî Allâh states: 'Zakât, which is a requirement for the cultivation of magnanimity, functions like food which possesses medicinal power. By *zakât* the urban community is put in good order and God is served ... It repels social injustice, allays the wrath of God, is of value against the punishments in the grave and removes impediments towards the natural progress and development of the

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human individual, since it checks stinginess' (*B.B.* 214). It belongs to the seemingly attitudes to be assumed towards the supplementary Attributes of God (*idâfiyyât*) (like the 'Provider', the 'Feeder') (*Khizâna* 8). Accordingly, 'sometimes the disbursement of money is the most likely location of the divine mercy' (*H.B.* I, 74).

In explanation of the prophetic rule that no *zakât* is due from a Muslim on his slave or his horse (Mu. *Zakât* 8), Shâh Walî Allâh elucidates: 'This is because as a rule slaves are not kept for procreation; likewise in many countries people breed horses to a far lesser degree than other grazing livestock. Thus they do not belong to property which increases' (*H.B.* II, 43).

In connection with the precept that it is forbidden to pay *zakât* to the Messenger of God and his family (Mu. *Zakât* 161 - 7), representing only people's impurities, the Delhi scholar declares: 'They are impurities because they are an atonement for people's sins ... Hence there are persons of high standing who perceive 'darkness' in alms ... Mystics also sometimes discern this darkness. My father mentioned alms as reluctantly as virtuous people talk of fornication and privy parts' (*H.B.* II, 45).

Fasting

If during a certain space of time, which should be neither too short nor too long, people are continuously occupied in remembering God, reciting the Qur'ân, fasting, giving charitable gifts and performing the *salât*, it inevitably produces a healthy reformatory effect upon their mind and body. Through fasting, one is even more motivated to leave off deceit, slander and vilification. During Ramadân, therefore, the devils are chained, the gates of Hell are locked, and the gates of Paradise are opened (*B.B.* 216). 'Fasting belongs to the seemingly attitudes to be assumed towards the privative³ predicates of God (*salbiyyât*), such as, for instance, the Attribute of *al-subbûh* (All-glorious)' (*Khizâna* 8). 'Its essence is the endurance of physical hardship for the sake of the Worshipped One. The point is that when a man loves somebody very dearly he cares little for his personal comfort and well-being, and pays no attention to it. He desires to sacrifice his love and welfare in behalf of the Worshipped One with the knowledge that He will be pleased with it and his enduring physical hardship is seen and heard by Him' (*B.B.* 119). 'Fasting is a great good deed which fortifies one's angelic nature and weakens his bestiality' (*H.B.* I, 74 f.).

'Among the prophets the way of fasting differed: Noah used to fast for a long period of time ..., Jesus for a day and then broke the fast according to his own fancy ... That was because fasting is an antidote and the dose of the antidote is fixed in accordance with the seriousness of the disease. The hearts of the people of Noah were hardened to a great extent ... Jesus was physically weak, ... while our Prophet was well acquainted with the advantages of the fast and its break, and he knew what was right or bad for himself. So he chose that which was in

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accordance with the exigencies of the moment. For his community he chose various kinds of fasting, such as, for instance, the 'Ashûrâ'-fast - it is celebrated on the grounds that it is the day on which God gave Moses victory over Pharaoh and his people -, and the 'Arafa'-fast (a voluntary fast on the 9th Dhu'l-Hijja) ... The very reason for the excellence of this latter fast over the 'Ashûrâ'-fast is that by it one plunges into the depths of the sea of divine mercy which comes down on that day (when the pilgrims pitch their camp for the celebration of the prescribed festival assembly) whereas the 'Ashûrâ'-fast refers to mercy granted in times long past' (H.B. II,54 f.).

Hajj

'All people have a place of pilgrimage; it may be a sanctuary or a river like the Ganges where the Hindus go on a pilgrimage, or it may be a tree, a semi-desert plain, a tomb, or a porch upon which wonderful signs appeared. Crowds gather there in order to be filled with the beneficent virtue of the venerated object. This is not so much a matter of custom or habitual practice; it is rather a universal propensity to single out an object of worship' (B.B. 120). 'And when a vehement yearning for his Lord arises in man's soul, then the *hajj* will be the only means to satisfy his longing ... And since it regards distant voyage and implies a troublesome achievement which is only accomplished through great efforts ..., it also expiates sins of a recent as well as or a remote past'. It is, however, not merely the individual believer who derives great benefit⁴ from the *hajj*. It appears equally to be very useful for the Muslim community as a whole: 'Just as a body politic now and then is in need of a screening in order to make a distinction between the sincere and the insincere, between the obedient and the rebellious, to consolidate its repute and authority again, and to let its people know about each other, so a religious community is in need of a *hajj* in order to make a distinction between the reliable believer and the hypocrite, to demonstrate how people have entered the religion of Allâh in droves, and to have an opportunity to meet one another' (H.B. I,75 f.).

Shâh Walî Allâh recognizes in the *hajj* ceremonies a striking resemblance with the constituents of the prayer ritual. What is explicitly found in the *salât* is already implied in the customs of the *hajj*. 'The pilgrimage', so he establishes, 'belongs to the seemly attitudes to be assumed towards the divine Names *al-hayy al-qayyûm* in an implicit manner, while the ritual prayer belongs to the seemly attitudes to be assumed towards the same Names but expressed in all details' (*Khizâna* 8). For 'putting oneself during the *hajj* in the state of ritual consecration (*ihrâm*) amounts to confessing *Allâhu akbar* by which, in both cases, voice is given to sincere devotion and reverence. Such as bending and prostration in prayer, being simply dressed is a manifestation of humility⁵. The standing at 'Arafa' is particularized by standing erect during the *salât*, while the ceremony of running the distance between Safâ and Marwa seven times and the circumambulation of

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the Ka'ba are expression of self-surrender to God. Shaving⁶ is comparable with the emitting of saliva⁷. In addition, in respect to the pilgrimage as well as to prayer limits, timings and rules of conduct are fixed for a full effectuation of the spiritual meaning inherent in both of them' (B.B. 218).

Jihâd

From sûra al-Furqân and other Qur'ânic sections it becomes clear, the Delhi scholar concludes, that 'predominance was not acquired by the Messenger of God in consequence of the presence of an angel who certified his being a prophet, or on account of the descent of a heavenly book upon him while people could see it descending with their own eyes. No, the way it happened was that of worldly kings who gain ascendancy through struggles and wars' (*Fuyûd*, 4th Vision).

From the explanations given by Shâh Walî Allâh it turns out that he ascribes at least three objectives to the *jihâd*:

1. to extend the boundaries of right guidance (*Khizâna* 6). Experience shows - as was also the case with Mohammed - that when faith is propagated, people usually do not appear amenable to reasonable arguments. Then it is for their good that *jihâd* is waged against them and they accept faith under compulsion. Their servants and children, at any rate, will keep to the faith out of their innermost conviction (H.B. II,170);
2. to fight criminality. *Jihâd* implies 'that God curses a wicked man who does injury to society and whose extinction is more in the interests of the universal welfare than his survival ... The sequel to this is that by the motivation to act for the general weal (*al-ra'y al-kullî*) people become convinced that it is a matter of great importance to deliver oppressed persons from the predatory ones and to fix penal laws for obstinate sinners ..., so that security and peace is restored to the worshippers of God'. In this way *jihâd* can be classed under the category of pious actions (H.B. I,76). By means of it 'the rules for economic activities (*mu'âmalât*) and marriage contracts were legislated to establish justice among the people' (H.B. I,5).

3. to combat idolaters. In a harangue delivered to soldiers the Delhi savant warns: 'O soldiers, God sends you out for *jihâd* in order to raise aloft the Word of God, to destroy idolatry (*shirk*) and its adherents. However, you have failed in performing the duty for which He has created you. You have started the training of horses and the bearing of arms for personal gains ... You have taken to drinking, shaving your beards, growing your moustaches, and to wronging innocent people' (*Tafh.* I, 216 f.).

And the Muslims in general were cautioned that 'if they forsook *jihâd* and co-operated with non-Muslims they would suffer severe humiliations and people of other religions would subdue them' (*H.B.* II, 173).

Dhikr, Recitation of the Qur'ân and Du`â'

When enumerating sundry specimens of devotion Shâh Walî Allâh first mentions *dhikr* (remembrance of God by the rhythmic

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recitation of formulas containing God's Names) and recital of the Qur'ân. For the cure of false conceptions about God, for experiencing the presence of God (*muhâdara*) and for the removal of hardness of heart there is no better means than the *dhikr*. He who listens to the recitation of the Qur'ân and lets it act on his soul will become coloured with the experiences of fear,

hope, and awe in respect of God's majesty, and will be immersed in God's grace (*H.B.* I, 76). Along with the *du`â'* (prayer of invocation) they 'are efficacious stimulants in strengthening faith and in acquiring spiritual perfection' (*B.B.* 218). The subject of *du`â'* inspires the Delhi divine to lengthy dissertations as he obviously thinks it a fundamental part of faith: 'People of all religions and creeds agree that *du`â'* is heard by God and that, as man advances in years, the relationship with God becomes more intensive and delightful ... There exists more than one kind of prayer and its answer. There are:

a) The prayer to which a man is impelled when, for the desired result of what is prayed for from the Merciful God, the celestial processes of causality co-operate with the terrestrial disposition. This can happen owing to the fact that the *nufûs nâtiqa* (reasoning souls) of the prayers are polished or lustrous by nature as is the case with prophets... We have discerned many prayers of this type to be answered. For example, Abraham's prayer that God allow him to enter Paradise and save him from Hell, and the prayer of the beloved (Prophet) that God allow him to triumph over the unbelievers after the announcement of the Word of God: 'Soon the host shall be routed, and turn their backs' (*Qur'ân* LIV, 45) ...

b) The prayer whereby the soul has adopted an ardent longing for God after a great affinity with the lofty Primary Causes has arisen in the very core of the soul, or the soul is involved in the acquisition of perfection. So, in accordance with this pursuit, prayer prepares the accompanying circumstances and appropriate conditions, on which the generosity of the Merciful God is to be based ...

c) The prayer whereby simple and compound divine Names are recited. They are indicative of divine Reality and function, as it were, as a nest for It. Consequently, by invoking them divine potency is engendered which provokes in the hearts of men the desire to do good works and produces the object aimed at, whether the worshipper is aware of it or not ... In this way, mercy is produced in the heart of a rich man so that he spends money lavishly on him who prayed; or sells his property to someone who is in great need of it for half the price.

d) Prayer by way of chants and a warding off of misfortunes. The Messenger of God was sent to the Arabs when they practised magic by idols. Hence he corrected their diseased customs and for magic he substituted belief in God's Unity and having recourse to His light' (*B.B.* 137 f.; 219).

'The best moment for a *du`â'* is the time when blessings are newly made ... If man wishes to take a favourable opportunity, he must apply himself with perseverance to it at daybreak or in the evening; the early morning, i.e. before one becomes busy with all 157.

kinds of occupations, may further the acquisition of spiritual perfection, while the evening, i.e. after one has been busy with one's daily routine and after 'darkness' of sins, etc. has come upon the soul, may further the removal of moral filth' (*B.B.* 119).

Aqîqa (sacrific on the seventh day after birth of a child) and *Khitân* (circumcision)

In the judgement of Shâh Walî Allâh both pre-Islamic customs were not abolished by Mohammed, since he recognized various valuable points in them. Though circumcision on the seventh day after birth is not an obligation, it is certainly recommendable (*EI2*, V, 20), and often combined with *`aqîqa*. It is one of the characteristics of natural religion, and an act of purification and incorporation into the community of the faithful; or to define it, as is done by the Delhi divine: 'In the Torah it is recorded to serve as a brand which God put on Abraham and his posterity, with a purpose similar to that which kings have in mind when they want to distinguish slaves, whom they do not intend to manumit, from other slaves' (*H.B.* I, 182). Hence circumcision might serve as a suitable counterpart to the Christian baptismal ceremony. And in respect of the *`aqîqa* ritual we are told that the *hanîfs* (monotheists *avant la lettre*) had at their disposal a rite which

made them realize that the child was a *hanîf* and a follower of the religion institutionalized by Abraham and Ismâ'îl. The most widely known institute introduced by these two patriarchs is the *hajj* which, like the *`aqîqa* ritual, includes the shaving of the head. In other words, by the imitation of this *hajj* ceremony the *`aqîqa* betokens the religion of Abraham. In addition, the shaving off of the hair of the child symbolized the passage of the state of a fetus into that of a child, as the hair is actually the remainder of the embryonic stage (*H.B.* II, 144f.).

Care of the Dead

Shâh Walî Allâh's statements as to what is proper and improper in respect of this are not always consistent. In the *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha* we read that 'prayer on behalf of the dead is prescribed by law, because the intercession of an assembly of believers for the benefit of the dead to a great extent furthers the descent of divine grace upon him ... It is recommended to recite the *sûrat al-fâtiha*, for it is the best and most comprehensive of all invocations' (*H.B.* II, 36). In a later work of his the Delhi scholar maintains that the recitation of the first *sûra* on behalf of the deceased, seeking his aid and so on, is of no use. In the same passages he urges confining the care of the dead to the following four activities:

1. displaying kindness to his near and dear, as that in a way amounts to a display of kindness to the dead one himself;
2. paying a visit to his tomb and reading the Qur'ân there; thus the bonds with the deceased are reinforced;
3. acting as his agent, and giving alms or manumitting a slave or performing the pilgrimage in his stead;
4. asking God's forgiveness for the benefit of the dead so that He may have mercy on him, may raise him in rank, and may

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close His eyes on his sins (*Khizâna* 9).

Visiting Shrines of Holy Men

Shâh Walî Allâh interpretes the rule of conduct dictated by Mohammed: 'I forbade you to visit graves, but now you may visit them' (*Muwatta' Dahâya* 8) as follows: 'According to me, it was forbidden as it gave occasion for the cult of tombs, but as soon as Islam was firmly established and the conviction had sunk into people's minds that it was absolutely interdicted to worship anybody but God, visiting tombs was allowed. The effective cause for this permit is the useful purpose it serves: It confronts people with death so that they awaken to awareness of the shortness of earthly life' (*H.B.* II, 38). Further, another benefit of crouching down at the shrine of godly people is that 'in the end one becomes closely united with the saint's spirit and is emerged into it. After having come to one's senses again, one will discover in one's soul all qualities that constitute the nature of the spiritual affiliation with this godly man' (*Q.J.* 102). So it is surely fully in line with these observations when we hear that once during his stay in Haramayn the Delhi savant visited the shrine in al-Safrâ` (a place between Mecca and Medina) ascribed to Abû Dharr al-Ghifârî, the Companion noted for trustworthiness and ascetism. The great event which then occurred to him was that the spirit of the saint appeared to him 'like the new moon in its third night' (*Fuyûd*, 8th Vision).

Later on, however, he began to throw doubts on the efficacy of prayers at the tombs of saints. In the *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha* he expounds that at the moment the spirits of perfect people are separated from their bodies, they become like a billow rooted on the spot; no impulse nor inspiration can anymore be expected from them (*H.B.* II, 77). They lose their miraculous power, the chief prerogative they possess, as soon as they die (*Tafh.* II, 75).

With the passage of time Shâh Walî Allâh became increasingly aware of the decadency that had spread over the whole Indian subcontinent. The epoch of heathendom recurred. In this connection the Delhi reformer tells us of his own sad experiences, stating: 'Lately I have seen weak brothers among the Muslims who choose rabbis and monks as lords apart from God (cf. *Qur'ân* IX, 31), make their shrines places of worship, and go on pilgrimage to their graves, their relics and their hills like Jews and Christians used to do ... They credit those who have no claim to these prerogatives with power of intercession ... They snatch elements from Hindu and Zoroastrian religions' (*B.B.* 125). Fierce is his condemnation: 'Anyone who goes to Ajmîr (renowned for the shrine of Khwâja Mu`în al-Dîn Hasan Chishtî) or the tomb of Salâr Mas`ûd Ghâzî in Bahrâ'ich in order to get an urgent desire gratified, commits a sin graver than murder or adultery' (*Tafh.* II, 45).

Magic Practices

On this subject the Delhi scholar holds ambivalent views. In his parental home the application of magic arts was not only not unknown, but even strongly recommended. In one of his early

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writings a whole chapter is devoted to useful suggestions (*fawâ'id*) he received from his father `Abd al-Rahîm in cases, for instance, of disease: 'My father used to advise: When somebody comes to you suffering from toothache, headache or flatulence, take a blank board, sprinkle pure sand on it, write with a nail the first three words of a series of eight comprising the letters of the Arabic alphabet on it, press the nail one time extra on the letter *alif* and recites the *sûrat al-fâtiha* once. Let him who is in pain meanwhile keep his finger firmly on the sore spot. Then ask him whether he feels relieved. If this is the case, then leave it at that. If not, press the nail on the letter *ba* and read the *sûrat al-fâtiha* twice. Repeat your former question. If he is recovered, then leave it at that. If not, press the nail on the letter *jim* and recite the *sûrat al-fâtiha* three times. And so on till the last of the ten letters. If he is still not recovered, God may cure him' (Q.J. 123). In an account of the activities of his father, he mentions that at the end of his life `Abd al-Rahîm donated his son two hairs of the Prophet as relics (*Anfâs* 41 f.). Shâh Walî Allâh himself wrote a commentary on the famous *hizb al-bahr* (Protective Litany of the Sea) of al-Shâdhilî (d. 1258), called *Hawâmî* (Drops of a Spiritual Dew). Various magic practices are explained in it. To give one example: 'If somebody wishes to pass enemies without being seen and without any obstruction, he should recite: 'Now the Word has been proved true against most of them' up to 'so that they cannot see' (*Qur'ân* XXXVI, 7 - 9), and he should breathe on pebbles, should throw them towards the enemies, or he should blow in their direction' (*Haw.* 45). Similarly, he appears to have no objection to the application of spells (*ruqan*), since 'it is, in essence, a clinging to words (composed of Qur'anic verses or divine Names) which bear an effect upon the World of Prefiguration' (*H.B.* II, 194). Yet, on the whole, the son is obviously less credulous than the father. When one day `Abd al-Rahîm reports that in the street he has met a tailor, living in their neighbourhood, a few days after his death, Shâh Walî Allâh does not seem very impressed. Such stories about a return from death, so he comments, I also find in collections of traditions and in books of sûfî masters. All of it comes to this, that those stories refer to somebody who was afflicted with *sakta* (apoplexy) (*Tafh.* II, 182 f.).

It is important to note that in his disquisitions on astrology, talismans and the like Shâh Walî Allâh often displays reserve. Certainly, it is not open to doubt that occult powers are operating in the universe and that they can be manipulated by man. The whole point is from which angle they are evaluated and to what extent man is at liberty to make use of them: 'Divine *hakîms* (like me) and common people all agree that stars have an influence on the world of elements. According to the former, this influence is due to specific qualities which God creates in things, such as heat in fire and cold in water ... In the view of the general public, however, this influence should be characterized as *taskhîr* (imprisonment of evil spirits) due to the effusion of 160.

the essential properties of stars ... And what is true about the influence of stars is, in the opinion of *hakîms*, equally true of *tîra* (augury), *hamâ* (a night-bird that frequents burial places and is believed to demand vengeance not yet taken for someone who has been killed), and *`adwâ* (infection with mange and other contagious diseases) ... In other words, when we speak with the tongue of the revealed Law (*shar'*), we declare that star-worshipping, augury, infection, divination (and so on) ... are all issues of *shirk*⁹. When the common men remonstrate that they (stars, birds, etc.) bear real effects, we reply: 'Does wine not bear an effect on our bodily health? Nevertheless, it is forbidden' (*Tafh.* II, 147 f.).

{1}. Here again the Delhi divine disapproves of extravagancies. He rejects the rite for which Chishtîs enjoy celebrity, viz. the *salât al-ma`kûs*, the *salât* of the 'inverted', i.e. the worshipper has a rope tied to his feet and his body is lowered into a well (Q.J. 75).

{2}. Refers to a tradition reported by Abû Hurayra. In it the Messenger of God states: 'We who are last shall be first on the Day of Resurrection, although others were given the Book before us and we were given it after them. It was this day (sc. Friday) which God prescribed for us. With regard to it the people who were given the Book before us come after us, the Jews observing the next day and the Christians the day following that' (Mu. Jum`a 20).

{3}. Denoting the absence of qualities like similarity to anything created, dependence on something else, plurality, etc.

{4}. It is at the same time 'a healthy spiritual exercise since it implies the renouncing of one's belongings and family, and in this way symbolizes man's passing away from this world to the next' (B.B. 217).

{5}. Because of the uniformity of dress, it is well nigh impossible to distinguish a servant from a master.

{6}. If a pilgrim puts himself in the state of ritual consecration, he has his hair and his nails cut and his armpits shaved.

{7}. Rinsing one's mouth is part of the ritual ablution before prayer.

{8}. But no objections seem to exist to consulting the dead on personal problems, since Shâh Walî Allâh states as quite an ordinary thing that once he went to the grave of his father in order to take his advice on the line of conduct he should follow with regard to one of his students (*Tafh.* I, 10).

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It is, however, plain kufr to imagine that one can successfully expect provision for one's needs from a dead person (Khizâna 8){9}. In his esoteric work al-Khayr al-kathîr Shâh Walî Allâh holds up as a warning the Ishrâqiyyûn (adepts of illuminative Wisdom) from among the Greeks who 'out of their aggressiveness and arrogance are infused with the worship of light and fire ... and become totally absorbed by the spirits of spheres and stars. But this is all deception' (Khizâna 1 and 9).

Chapter Fifteen: Social and Economic Ideas

Under the circumstances Shâh Walî Allâh found himself, he was obliged to formulate his thoughts on socio-economic issues. For 'in this time there are two principle causes for the deterioration of the existing order:

- a) the depletion of the state treasury due to the fact that people ... having chosen a career in the military or legal world claim a right to it, or persons as hermits, poets and the like who use to live on the donations of kings without doing any worthwhile work ...
- b) imposing heavy taxes on peasants, merchants and professional people, and raising them until this leads to the ruin and extermination of the submissive ones' (H.B. I, 45). Confronted with these hard facts the Delhi educationist now had every reason to stress the indispensability of solidarity for the development of a proper social order. This principle can be applied in various ways, in trade, craft and farming. Thus there are the institutes of *mudâra*ba (sleeping partnership, whereby one partner furnishes the capital and the other the business acumen), *mufâwada* (unlimited mercantile partnership, whereby the whole property of both parties is engaged; mutual guarantee as well as procuration are presupposed), *inân* (limited liability company which implies mutual procuration but no mutual responsibility), *shirkat al-sanâ'î* (partnership of artisans in which, for instance, two tailors or two dyers take equal shares), *shirkat al-wujûh* (credit union, without capital, in which the partners pool the credit and share the profit), *musâqât* (lease contract for palm gardens, in which one partner provides the land and seed, and the other the oxen and labour), and *mukhâbara* (contract under which one partner furnishes the land and the other the seed, oxen and labour) (H.B. II, 116f.).

The requirement of solidarity is, in the opinion of Shâh Walî Allâh, also the main ground for the prohibition of *maysir* (game of chance) and *ribâ* (interest): 'You should realize that *maysir* is unlawful gain ... and is not in keeping with civic spirit (*tamaddun*) and mutual aid (*ta'âwun*) ... Equally *ribâ* constitutes ... unlawful gain. For, as a rule, the borrowers are people fallen into a severe state of indigence, mostly not able to pay their debt in time ... When this way of earning money takes root, it leads to the abandonment of agrarian trades and skilled crafts which are fundamental means of earning a living in a healthy society ... Both ways of gain mentioned are tantamount to inebriation, as they are in flagrant contradiction with the principles of God has laid down for earning a livelihood' (H.B. II, 106).

A valuable clue to what is *inter alia* a divinely sanctioned manner of earning one's livelihood can be derived from the prophetic saying: 'He who revives dead land becomes its owner' (Bu. *Harath* 15). 'The idea lying at the root of these words is

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... that all property belongs to God ... The whole earth is, in fact, tantamount to a mosque or a hospice assigned to travellers, on which everybody has a claim. Accordingly, the rule 'first come, first served' is here applicable. Possessory right implies that he who brings land under cultivation has more right to it than anyone else' (H.B. II, 103).

Being aware of the great number of responsibilities with which God has entrusted human beings, Shâh Walî Allâh points out that man is superior to the other species of animals in at least three respects, to wit:

1. he is intent on general welfare (*ra'y kullî*), whereas animals are merely actuated by sensual lusts and sudden promptings;
2. he is sensitive to art and beauty (*zarâfa*), whereas animals only desire a thing to meet their needs;
3. he is able to think out devices for further progress (*irtifâqât*) (H.B. I, 38).

The term *irtifâq* (gaining benefit by) is already found in one of Shâh Walî Allâh's early writings (to wit *Fuyûd*, 11th Vision), but in the *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha* and the *Budûr al-bâzigha* it appears to be a fundamental idea forming the basis of an intriguing rudimentary sociology. To this end the very specific sense of 'stage of socio-economic development' is ascribed to it¹.

The Delhi scholar distinguishes four *irtifâqât* required for the ultimate establishment of a society as it ought to be and is purposed in God's planning²: 'In the first phase of socio-economic development man obtains the power of speech so that he can phrase his thoughts in a natural way, unimpeded by convention. Then the circle is enlarged by making use of tropes in his speech to coin words relating the things conceived in the mind, and by varying modulations in his voice to express various moods, until at last the languages become distinct and different ... It is also in this first phase that he becomes acquainted with edible grains suited to his physical constitution, and learns how to tap wells for those who live in areas far from the water of springs and rivers ..., how to domesticate animals to use them for labour otherwise hard to perform ..., how to prepare a dwelling by screening it from heat and cold, and how to make a garment from skins of animals or from the leaves of trees ... And it is in this phase that man is led to acquire for himself a wife as

uncontested property to satisfy his lusts and to reproduce his off-spring' (*B.B.* 53 f.). Again another aspect of this stage of primitive culture typical of societies composed of inhabitants of deserts, high mountains and regions far away from sound climates is 'that man takes to barter and co-operation in some way or another ... (Further, that out of necessity of law and order) he who appears to be the most sensible person and the most formidable with regard to severity, becomes the leader ... and a code of conduct is enacted to settle disputes, to check a criminal and to repulse raiders' (*H.B.* I, 39 f.). To sum up: 'The first phase represents a stage of development based on the level of
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animals. However, it excels animal life by the additional qualities of serenity of life, communal sense, sensitivity, and civilization' (*B.B.* 51). At this level man began to apply himself to agriculture and cattle farm. Yet, in this first period it was not due to man to believe in the Hereafter and angels (*Tafh.* I, 68).

In the second stage of socio-economic development we have to do with 'communities of sedentary people and urban centers flourishing in sound climates' (*H.B.* I, 39). Since compared by the era of primitive civilization the complexity of life increased in this juncture, the need arises for more suitable institutions and prudent measures permitting progress. Thus, Shâh Walî Allâh comes to the conclusion that the following five kinds of science become requisite:

1. the science pertaining to the way of living, with reference to consistency in conduct and practical knowledge about eating, drinking, dressing, dwelling, etiquette, manner of conversation, way of travelling, etc.;
2. the science of earning a livelihood, which involves the various occupation people pursue, befitting their personal capacities, and the means that help them in their crafts of fellah, carpenter, smith and so on;
3. the science of domestic life, which pertains to rearing children, married life, slavery, responsibilities to relatives, management and manners of companionship;
4. the science of mutual dealings, which concerns purchase and sale, giving presents, tenancy, lending, debt and pledge;
5. the science of co-operation, which relates to surety, silent partnership, commercial enterprise, power of attorney and tenure (*B.B.* 50).

During the second stage of socio-economic evolution human society finally develops into a city-state 'consisting of small towns which have joined together and in which the inhabitants carry on trade with each other ... Due to that unifying link it is an organic whole with each group of people and each family as the constituent parts thereof' (*B.B.* 70). As soon as a city-state is established, man has reached the third stage of socio-economic development. For the development of a city-state, unity is essential. The instrument of government through which such unity is preserved and developed should be a strong and powerful personality, an *imâm* in the fullest sense of the word (*B.B.* 71). He is to be assisted by seven public functionaries, to wit a vizier who is responsible for the collection and distribution of taxes; a commander-in-chief; a commander of guards; a *qâdî*; a chief *mufî* called 'shaykh al-Islâm' whose duty is to uphold religion and spiritual guidance; a versatile intellectual (*hakîm*) who possesses knowledge of medicine, poetry, astrology, history, arithmetic and the art of composition; and a business manager who takes care of the private financial affairs of the *imâm* (*B.B.* 84). For the progress of a city-state and its battle against corruption, abuses, disorder and decay the following requirements are indispensable:

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1. Judiciary. 'When ... stinginess, envy and disregard of rights enter into economic transactions, disagreements and disputes are bound to spring up among the members of a city-state ..., there must be an acknowledged institution available to which one may have recourse for an equitable settlement of disputes'.
2. The institute of an executive. 'When people of perverted disposition and pernicious activities prevail over other people and begin to influence them, the city-state becomes depraved and disordered, there should be a strong body to take deterrent and punitive measures against such people'.
3. Police and military force. 'People often move into violent activities such as murder, robbery or rebellion and deliberately try to disturb the peace and order in a city-state ... In order to control such violent situations and preserve the city-state from the misfortune they cause, a defence force, constituted of brave fighters, is essential'.
4. Welfare and public works. 'The city-state has institutes and corporate bodies which, if existent, render it a welfare state, whereas the lack of them makes guarding it defective ... Things to be taken care of, for example, are the protection of the frontier-accesses of a country, the construction of fortresses, walls, markets and bridges, digging beds for rivers, marrying off orphans, safeguarding of their properties, the distribution of alms among the needy, the division of an inheritance among heirs'.
5. Religious and moral instruction. 'Sincere faith and true religion cannot dispense with an informant, though

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both of them are based on such clear proofs that sane people find the way to them by themselves. However, the numerous men of corrupt nature who follow their lusts and passions and oppose the truth, are in need of a man of wisdom, a teacher of religion and a preacher who can urge them to cultivate noble qualities, to manage the house properly, and to conduct themselves correctly towards others' (B.B. 71 f.).

The fourth and last phase of socio-economic development is the result of quarrels arising between various petty *imâms* and causing heavy loss of life and livelihood. Then there is an urgent need for a very powerful and firm overlord or caliph. Shâh Walî Allâh compares this situation with the state of emergency which once prompted the Israelites to ask their prophet Samuel for a king (cf. *Qur'ân* II,246) (H.B. I,47). The caliph's function is in general to see that the heads of city-states administer justice properly and do not wage war against one another. To this end, he wields two swords: a sword of subjugation and a sword of affection (B.B. 87). Further, 'he should have clearly visible symbols of people's loyalty such as prayers for him ... and the convention in our days of having dinar coins stamped with the name of the caliph' (H.B. I,48). Great rulers in history, like Alexander the Great, somehow enforced this fourth stage, but it fell to Mohammed to realize it fully by the introducing a religion which would render all other institutionalized religions unnecessary (B.B. 199). In effect, 'the Prophet was sent to lay

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the foundation of a universal caliphate and to render his religion victorious over the other ones' (H.B. II,173). So unity of policy and of religion is warranted for all inhabitants of the earth and human society is given its final shape.

Yet, at the same time one ought to recognize that social customs as such may constitute a momentuous support, as well as a great impediment. They yield positive and beneficial results, if they are introduced by guides of human society being in the happy possession of the seven cardinal virtues and if God renders the rest of the people disposed by nature to accept their lead, making 'their minds like mirrors, in which images of other mirrors are reflected' (B.B. 87). If man had not an inner stimulus to follow another man he would not have adopted ethical qualities, and he would not have passed through the successive phases of socio-economic development. The world would have regressed in its evolution, and the majority of men would not have got beyond the level of animal life. Thus the best customs are those by which the ethical dispositions of individuals are improved and which are conducive to a continuous progress of the society. They should be wide instead of narrow in their application. They should not be so rigid that the slightest disregard of a minute detail in practice may lead to unbearable public disapproval. They should pursue a middle course between extravagant luxury and extremely austere way of life as was the case with the customs of the civilized people of the Hijâz in pre-Islamic times who preserved moderate standards which kept a happy balance between the austere way of life of the Bedouins and the pompous status of living of Persians and Byzantines in those days (B.B. 87 ff. and H.B. II,126).

An additional advantage that customs may offer is that they can be of help in putting a person's faith into practice. This is particularly true of people who are fully occupied with their work and lack inner stability; if there were no customs, they would not concern themselves with the message of Islam (B.B. 195).

However, a custom may as well come to include invalid elements. At least, three cases of this are imaginable, to wit:

1. It may prevent the emergence of ethical qualities in man, if it does not suit the nature of a particular human individual. 'Thus, if it is based on pettiness or on following a leader, it will prevent a man who is a strong personality from magnanimity and domination, it will prevent the man who is evil or stricken with misfortunes from reforming his ways, since it is only appropriate for such a person if it descends to the level of of submissiveness and pettiness'.
2. It may cause moral decadence if a custom is adopted by people dominated by limited perspectives rather than considering comprehensive beneficial purposes. This is the case with 'customs permitting fornication and sodomy and those allowing women to adopt the fashion of men and men to adopt the fashion of women'.
3. It may impair proximity to God, because of its being based either on going to extremes in earning a livelihood, or on plunging into pastimes like flute-playing, chess, hunting acquiring 166.

pigeons, etc. (B.B. 88 and H.B. I,49). Other cultural activities strongly deprecated because of kindling the passions are the pursuits of Persian and Hindu literature and of poetics (*Tafh.* II,247).

When implementing his socio-therapeutic principles, the Delhi critic at times remonstrated with different classes of contemporary Muslim society on abuses typical of their occupations or modes of life. He accuses the rulers of the provinces of living in the same lavish style as the kings of Persian and Byzantium in the days of the Prophet. In consequence of this, they are 'forced to levy an exorbitant rate of taxation upon the cultivators, merchants, and the like. The latter suffer from great hardships. If they refuse to pay the taxes, the

rulers go to battle against them and chastise them, and if they pay, they are reduced to the level of asses and bullocks, ... and are not even allowed an hour to rest from their labours, so that they find no time to take any notice of the life to come' (*H.B.* I, 105 f.). 'A state can only prosper if small taxes are collected and the strictly necessary number of civil servants is taken on. When a majority of the people earn their living as artificers and civil servants, and a minority are cattle-keepers and farmers, economic difficulties will arise' A concomitant cause of decline is 'the pressure on the public treasury because of people who make it a habit to pocket money from it for sham services, contending that they have a claim on it on account of being a soldier, a specialist in religious law' (*H.B.* I, 45). Soldiers are told: 'God has incited you to military action with the object of the expansion of Islam ..., to eradicate polytheism and its adherents, but you have neglected this exhortation, ... and are out for the increase of your property' (*Tafh.* I, 216 f.). In the same passage we find also a fierce denunciation of the *amîrs* (government officers): 'O *amîrs*, do you not fear God when you indulge in short-lived and trivial pleasures and neglect to take notice of your subjects who devour one another? Is it not a fact that you drink wine in public? You cannot deny that brothels, taverns and gambling-dens are set up - still you feel no qualms of conscience -, and that in this vast Empire the *hadd* punishments fixed for certain crimes have not been enforced for six or seven centuries. In your way the weak one is exploited, whereas the mighty is left untouched'.

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- 1}. Not found in the dictionaries. Shâh Walî Allâh nowhere explains this self-devised technical meaning explicitly. The pursued line of thought may be: finding help from the environment (fellow men, animals, materials supplied by nature) for the fulfilment of man's collective needs to an ever increasing extent.
 - 2}. Accordingly, the knowledge concerning man's *irtifâqât* has been deposited in the structure of the Throne of God, i.e. the source of divine planning (*Fuyûd*, 11th Vision).
 - 3}. Cf. G.A. Herklots, *Qanoon-e-Islam*, London 1832, 180: 'they also take out the *neeza* (spear) on its (i.e. of Husayn's standard) peregrination ... (for Husayn's head was) carried by Ayzeed's order through different cities on the point of a javelin'.

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Epilogue

In life and works Shâh Walî Allâh represents the last phase of classical Muslim thought, on the eve of modern times. All discussions of the foregoing ages entered into by the *falâsifa*, *ikhwân al-safâ'* (Brethren of Purity), *mutakallimûn* and mystic theorists like Ibn al-'Arabî have been wound up in his writings. 'It is impossible', he establishes, 'that there can have been found an era more complete than the one we live in' (*Tafh.* II, 143).

So he specifies his mission in life as follows: 'Part of the assignments of God's grace to me in this epoch is that the rational, traditional and mystic sciences of the scholars of this community are united in my heart in a harmonious way and stripped of internal inconsistencies, on account of which every doctrine can be put in its proper context' (*Faysal wahdat al-wujûd wa'l-shuhûd*, Delhi n.d., 3).

Significant of Shâh Walî Allâh's mentality is his preference for the legal thought of al-Shâfi'î in a community where nota bene the leading school is that of Abû Hanîfa. Instead of benefiting from *ra'y* and *istihsân* (one's own judgment and arbitrary personal opinion) providing favourite ways out for the Hanafis, the task to be performed by the Shâfi'îs is to concentrate on the science of *usûl al-fiqh* (roots of legal knowledge) furnished by qualified Qur'ân exegetes and experts of *hadîth* in order to verify the statements of the founder. 'Roots' offer a more substantial proof for our behaviour than individual opinions!

Another distinctive feature of his realm of thought is the respect he shows for Ibn Taymiyya. This is not surprising given the latter's preference for 'the happy mean' (*wasat*), i.e. conciliation and endeavours to integrate tradition, reason and free-will. In reply to a letter from his student Makhdûm Mu'în al-Dîn of Thatta, in which the latter presses him to write a refutation of objections raised against the doctrines of Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), Shâh Walî Allâh first of all affirms that in his opinion Ibn Taymiyya, like Ibn al-'Arabî and Ahmad Sirhindî, is among the most faithful servants of God (*Maktûbât ma'a manâqib Abî 'Abd Allâh Muh. b. Ismâ'îl al-Bukhârî wa-fadîlat Ibn Taymiyya*, Delhi 1890, 27). This high tribute paid to the famous Hanbalî theologian and expert of jurisprudence accords with the great influence his views must have had on the shaping of Shâh Walî Allâh's world of ideas. They have many points in common. When the Delhi divine states that according to him travels to a tomb, a shrine of a saint, or to the Mount Sinai also fall equally under the Prophet's prohibition in Mu. *Hajj* 415 to undertake a journey for the visit of holy places except for the three mosques: the sacred mosque (i.e. the Ka'ba), the Aqsâ mosque in Jerusalem and the mosque in Medina (*H.B.* I, 92), he echoes the standpoint of Ibn Taymiyya who declares that 'if one had vowed to journey to the tomb of Abraham or the Prophet, or to the Mount Sinai ..., one is not obliged to perform it ..., since journeys to places like these are forbidden by the Prophet' (Ibn 168.

Taymiyya, *Majmû'a al-risâ'il al-kubrâ*, Cairo 1323, 1903, II, 55). However, in the case at issue the Delhi divine appears to be less stringent than his predecessor who also includes the Prophet's grave among the forbidden objects of worship. In the Preface of his *Fuyûd al-Haramayn* he qualifies a pilgrimage to Mohammed's tomb as one of the greatest of all God's graces. In this context one has to bear in mind that the main aim of the Prophet's mission is 'to act as an intercessor for the believers and to serve as a medium for very special mercy on the Day of Judgment' (*H.B.* II, 75). If the Delhi reformer claims that the very foundation of civilization is co-operation (*H.B.* II, 106), he actually repeats words of Ibn Taymiyya who says: 'None of mankind can attain complete welfare, either in this world or the next, except by association, co-operation, and mutual aid' (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Hisba fî'l-Islâm*, Cairo 1318/1900, 3). And when Ibn Taymiyya puts forward that 'the choicest men after the Prophet were Abû Bakr and 'Umar ..., both of whom are such that the sun has never shone or set on any one, save the prophets' (Ibn Taymiyya, *al-Risâ'il wa'l-masâ'il*, Cairo 1349, 1930, I, 51 f.), we are immediately reminded of Shâh Walî Allâh's plea for the undeniable superiority of the first two caliphs. Similarly, his view that the one very weak point of 'Alî was his lack of statecraft, this is in line with the judgment of Ibn Taymiyya. While discussing the deficiency of man's knowledge of God, the Delhi scholar maintains that though it is impossible for ordinary human comprehension to speak adequately of the divine Attributes man must still be enabled to form a notion of them (*H.B.* I, 63). This stance again agrees with what is set forth by the Hanbalî author, namely that though the Attributes of God are contained in the *mutashâbihât* (not clearly intelligible verses of the Qur'ân) of which God alone knows the true interpretation, man can nevertheless have some idea of them (Ibn Taymiyya, *Majmû'a al-risâ'il al-kubrâ*, I, 29). Further, Ibn Taymiyya appears to have the same disgust of philosophers as Shâh Walî Allâh: 'These Aristotelian philosophers', the Hanbalî theologian points out, 'are among the lowest people as far as their teachings and living are concerned' (I. Goldziher, *The Zâhirîs*, Leiden 1971, 17 5).

Self-examination proved to Shâh Walî Allâh that he was a man of moderation by nature: 'In fact', he confesses, 'as a rule I do not like discussions in which opposing opinions clash' (*Fuyûd*, 33rd Vision). The

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same is said about Ibn Taymiyya: 'his doctrine was intended to be primarily ... a doctrine of synthesis or of conciliation' (H. Laoust in *EI*2,III,953). Yet in this respect there is an important difference between the two. Ibn Taymiyya's efforts at harmonization are restricted to the integration of *`aql* (reason) and *naql* (tradition). Speculative philosophy is not included. On the contrary, he is a fierce fighter of pantheism (*wahdat al-wujûd*) as advocated by Ibn al-`Arabî. In a separate polemic treatise, entitled *Haqîqa madhhab al-ittihâdiyyîn aw wahdat al-wujûd* (Truth about the Teachings of the Exponents of the oneness of being or Pantheism), he exhibits the pernicious effects the doctrine has on Muslim faith. The Delhi scholar, on 169.

his part, is charged with a more comprehensive task of synthesizing. He was born in an age in which the effectuation of a coherent interrelation between the rational, traditional and esoteric was urgently needed (*Maktûb* 3). In sharp contrast to Ibn Taymiyya, Shâh Walî Allâh holds Ibn al-`Arabî in great esteem, and appears to have many views and features in common with the Shaykh al-akbar. By calling himself an Uwaysî like the Andalusian mystic he claims for himself the ability to discern intuitively between the basic teachings of religion as handed down by Mohammed and that part of the traditions which has crept in and been tampered with (*al-Juz' al-latîf* 28).

And when he argues that the relation of the pre-existent Mohammed to the other prophets and his heirs is similar to that between a whole and its parts (*Fuyûd*, 11th Vision), he repeats the teaching of his great predecessor (cf. A.E. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Muhyid Dîn Ibnul Arabi*, Lahore n.d., 72). When he mentions with approval that, according to Jâmî (d. 1492), Ibn al-`Arabî filled a position higher than sainthood but below prophethood (*Tafh.* II, 33), Jâmî in fact credits him with the same dignity as Shâh Walî Allâh intends for himself as occupant of the office of *hakîm* (*Khizâna* 4).

Starting from the maxim: 'God's express will is that we should refrain from disagreement and sectarianism' (*Tafh.* I, 206), the Delhi scholar applies the following procedures to resolve, or at least minimize seeming discrepancies:

1. by placing teachings in their historical setting. Every age has its own exigencies and particular ways of expression. So when discussing different theories and doctrines advanced by Muslim mystics in the course of time, 'one should take into account that all of them were adapted to the current circumstances' (*H* II);
2. by pointing out that contrarieties may be due to people's looking at an object from a different angle. Thus, for instance, various levels and faculties are discernible in the concept of *rûh* (spirit). It can be viewed in its physio-biological aspects, can be taken as a *mithâlî* reality, i.e. the shape the *rûh* receives in the World of Prefiguration before its arrival in the World of Bodily Forms (*nâsût*), and so on. In other words, someone is right in maintaining that *rûh* is a subtle element which streams in a human body like fire in the charcoal, just as the person who propounds that it is set apart from material pollution: 'every man has a direction in which he turns' (*Qur'ân* II, 148) (*Fuyûd*, 40th Vision);
3. by explaining that incongruities can be the outcome of different phraseologies. In reply to a questioner who asked Shâh Walî Allâh: 'What do you think of the disparities you come upon in statements of Ibn al-`Arabi, who at one time speaks of Pharaoh's belief and at another time of his unbelief?' (Ibn al-`Arabî, *Fusûs al-hikam*, ed. A.E. Affifi, Beirut n.d.I, 210 & 212), the Delhi scholar expounds that this is a question of particular phraseologies (*alsina*). 'For a human individual', he continues, 'there are many realities, and every reality has its particular aspects and references. For every particular aspect 170.

there is a specific phraseology to interpret it ... At one time a sûfi gnostic will restrict himself to what is found in the World of Immaterial Entities, at another he will concentrate on what is met in the World of Bodily Forms .. Every time he will use a phraseology that is appropriate for that specific reality, and then it is not necessary that the same things are stated by all these phraseologies' (*Tafh.* I, 19);

4. by preserving a balance between two points of view. In judging the Companions of the Prophet, so we are told, people make two kinds of mistakes. Some assume that all of them were men of noble character and that discord was unknown to them. This opinion rests on pure imagination. Detailed reports exist on their internal quarrels. Others take to criticizing them and to uttering imprecations against them, as soon as their attention is drawn to such conditions. Although Shâh Walî Allâh himself is immediately willing to admit that the Companions were not exactly impeccable men, he maintains that none the less it might be better not to talk about their slips from virtue lest the *umma* should disintegrate (*Tafh.* II, 244);

5. by pleading for tolerance in respect of ritual varieties. In disputes whether or not it should be prescribed to say *amîn* loudly, instead of faintly, during the *salât* and to lift one's hands at the time of bowing, matters must not be put to extremes. For both standpoints, Shâh Walî Allâh declares there might be something to be said for. Under no circumstances, however, is anybody free to cause much stir among his townsmen on account of such questions (*H.B.* II, 9 f.).

6. by making what is revealed congruent with the rational (*tatbîq al-manqûl bi'l-ma'qûl*), i.e. allowing flexibility within the traditional stock. *Tatbîq* is, *inter alia*, a suitable medium for the reconciliation of the proponents of the four juridical schools with each other. As regards the Delhi scholar, it concerns the accommodation of the Hanafî and Shâfi'î schools. So it constitutes 'a beautiful effort to reunite the Muslims' (*H.B.* I, 8). The fact that he lived in a country in which the Hanafî school is normative did not deter him from applying a Shâfi'î rule, if he considered it more fitting to a case under consideration.

Still Shâh Walî Allâh's endeavours after moderation are never an end in themselves. This is a good thing, for people whose only aim is to pursue a middle course can be extremely dull, if not annoying, apprehensive as they are of any deviation. The Delhi scholar's sense of balance is harmoniously coupled with a remarkable independence of thought, on account of which he produces many ideas of refreshing originality.

It is true that in order to evade unnecessary trouble with heresy-hunters, he occasionally condemns Mu'tazilism, but this does not prevent him from making use of Mu'tazilite doctrines if they agree with his own convictions. When he is asked to write a refutation of Shî'î contentions because of political unrest they caused in eighteenth-century India, he complies with the request. Nevertheless several notions especially cherished by the Shî'îs, as e.g. the concept *ibdâ'*, are recognizable in his 171.

dissertations, and apparently their origin did not constitute an insuperable impediment to their possible utility.

In fine, the ultimate concern of the Delhi divine was to make an independent inquiry into the basic truths of religion (*asrâr al-dîn*). Here again he follows in the footsteps of his famous predecessor al-Ghazâlî, who inserts in his *Ihyâ' ulûm al-dîn* elaborate accounts about the *asrâr* of cultic purity, *salât*, *zakât*, *hajj*, and fasting. Both of them were eager to expose the rationale of the various institutes of Islam, thereby enabling their co-believers to assent unreservedly to its tenets and to willingly obey its commandments. The *Hujjat Allâh al-bâligha* itself 'is comparable in many ways', as M.K. Hermansen rightly observes, 'to al-Ghazâlî's effort to explain and justify ritualistic aspects of Islam according to insights obtained through the mystic experience of the Sufis' (*Studia Islamica* 63, Paris 1986, p. 145).

It is not amazing that in later ages orthodox believers could be shocked by interpretations the Delhi revivalist courageously advanced. So Indian '*ulamâ*' at times appear unpleasantly surprised by notions entertained by their venerated countryman. When asked about a judgment in the matter of a ritual detail on which Shâh Walî Allâh dissents from the Hanafî experts, the Deobandî jurist-prudent 'Azîz al-Rahmân (d. 1928) straightaway rejects the opinion of the Delhi scholar (*Fatâwâ-i Dâr al-'ulûm Deoband*, Deoband 1963, vol. II, 228). On the other hand, liberal thinkers, who were unafraid of ideas originating from the West, as e.g. Sayyid Ahmad Khân (d. 1898) (cf. Ch.W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, New Delhi 1978, 33 f.) and Sir Muhammad Iqbâl (d. 1938) (cf. A.J. Halepota, 'Shâh Walyullâh and Iqbâl, the Philosophers of Modern Age', *Islamic studies*, Islamabad, XIII, 1974), as a rule wholeheartedly acknowledge their indebtedness to their compatriot hold in high honour.

To this way, for every Western and non-Western student of his thought it is a privilege to trace the impressive achievements he attained in his lofty enterprise.

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175.

Glossary of Technical Terms

`adâla, rectitude,
`adam, non-being, not-yet existence,
`adl, justice,
aflâk, celestial spheres whirling around the earth like the whorls on a spindle,
ahadiyya, absolute Oneness; the One as apart from all possible relations and individualisations,
ahkâm, instructions, regulations, determinants,
ahl al-kitâb, possessors of the Scripture: the Jews, Christians and Zoroastrians,
ahwâl, conditions to which a worshipper is transferred by purifying his *nafs*; *sûfî* states; ways of being;
 transitory mental states,
akhfâ, 'most arcane' *latîfa* situated in the dura mater.
 Through it a mystic receives information from the *tajallî a`zam* as well as from the *nafs kullîyya*,
akhilâq fâdila, surplus virtues, seven in number: valour, proper sexual behaviour, magnanimity, consistency in
 conduct, mastery of language, scrupulosity, wisdom,
`âlam al-ajsâm, physical world,
`âlam al-arwâh, world of immaterial entities,
`âlam al-jabarût, the World of Omnipotence, i.e. of archetypes in the mind of God. Things in this world are still
 in a state of superformal existence in distinction to the lower *`âlam al-mithâl* where the objects possess
 subtle forms,
`âlam al-lâhût, the World of the Godhead, the incommunicable world of the divine Essence,
`âlam al-malakût, the World of Sovereignty, i.e. of the angelic beings and spiritual realities; intermediate
 between the *`âlam al-jabarût* and the *`âlam al-ajsâm*. Here the decree of God takes shape before being
 translated into physical manifestation,
`âlam al-mithâl, the World of Prefiguration, in which things are shaped before they are embodied in actual
 existence upon the earth, in the same way as an architect draws the shape of a house on a piece of paper
 before he builds it in empiric reality,
`âlam al-nâsût, phenomenal world, world of bodily forms,
`amâ, 'dark mist', i.e. the simple hidden pure Essence devoid of qualities and relations; primordial matter,
anâniyya, I-ness, egoity. It is full-fledged (*kubrâ*) if it regards the self-consciousness of the cosmos, and it is
 in an embryonic stage (*sughrâ*) if it concerns the nascent self-consciousness of souls possessing
 volition,
`aql, intellect. A perceptible *latîfa* residing in the brain. It covers the area lying between the concrete and
 abstract. One of its distinguishing marks is sure knowledge in respect of matters related to traditional
 doctrines. It can also refer to the stage at which God becomes conscious of Himself,
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`arad, accident. It is the opposite as well as the complement of *jawhar* which is the constitutive form of it,
`ârîf*, he who possesses *ma`rifa: gnostic,
asbâb al-nuzûl, occasions of revelation,
ashâb al-a`râf, Companions of the Limbo, being neither in Paradise nor in Hell,
ashâb al-yamîn, Companions of the Right (of the Throne during the Last Judgment): the ordinary believers,
ashghâl, meditation techniques,
asmâ, divine Names; attributes in action, i.e. powers scattered through the *`âlam al-amr* (world of
 instantaneous creation) and the *`âlam al-khalq* (world of what is created by degrees). They depart from
 God's Essence as *asmâ' badiyya* and return to It as *asmâ' `awdiyya*,
asmâ' hâditha, divine powers regulating daily happenings,
asrâr, 'mysteries', underlying ideas, basic notions,
âthâr, effects; external products of God's Names,
a`yân thâbita, immutable archetypes, i.e. the ontological models which are established in divine
 Consciousness and upon which the phenomenal things are produced,
`ayn thâbita, essential character of man which determines his fate, transcendental archetype of man's
 personality,
`azîma, an ordinance as interpreted strictly,

barzakh, intermediate screen between two spheres of existence; interval of time (between death and
 Resurrection); intermediary,
baqâ, 'subsistence': after having been annihilated in God (*fanâ*), the mystic lives through Him and in Him,
bast, 'expansion'. This may refer to earthly processes of causality as well as to a spiritual state of the *sûfî*

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who experiences elation through the widening of the heart,
bay`a,vow of allegiance of a sûfî novice to the initiating master by clasping his right hand,
burhân,decisive proof; syllogistic demonstration; manifestation (of truth),

dawâ'ir,circles,spheres,regions where prophets reside,and which have to be traversed if a mystic wants to reach ecstasy,
dhât,absolutely self-subsistent Essence of God,
dhawq, 'tasting': direct experience,intuitive anticipation,
dhikr,remembrance of God by the rhythmic recitation of formulas containing God's Names. It may be uttered aloud or in a low voice. Ultimately the worshipper forgets the set forms of words,and thinks only of the Named,
dîn,archetypal religion,
diyâna,scrupulosity; the capacity to co-ordinate properly man's cognitive faculties with his external behaviour,
du`â,personal prayer; invocation to which miraculous effects of an apotropaic nature are ascribed,

falâsifa,Muslim philosophers who owe a lot to the legacy of Greece,
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fanâ,ceasing to exist individually on account of which the reasoning soul can be coloured with the colour of God,
faqîh,expert of jurisprudence,
fard,singular man; a gnostic who is able to establish particular connections with cosmic elements and entities,
fawâ'id,useful suggestions for daily life,
fiqh,jurisprudence,
firâsa,a technique of inductive divination,clairvoyance,
fitan,trials of faith whereby the condition of a man is evinced in respect of evil and good,
fitra,inherent nature,properly developed disposition,
furû`,the body of positive rules derived from the Law,i.e. as It is actually applicable in courts of justice,

hudûd,God's 'restrictive statutes' concerning offences of which God Himself had defined the punishments in the Qur'ân,
hadîth,having had a beginning,transient;oral tradition which can be traced to Mohammed or one of his Companions. Thus by means of anecdotes we are informed of what the Prophet held as an opinion,or his tacet approval of something said or done in his presence,
hadîth qudsî,divine saying not occurring in the Qur'ân,
hadra,state in which God presents Himself to the heart of a mystic; stage of Being,in which God descends and reveals Himself,
hajar al-baht, 'gem of stupefaction'. A center in the heart of man which functions as a telescope for the reception of light waves transmitted by divine radiations. Consequently,glaring rays of light spread from this 'gem',and stupify the mind and other faculties of the mystic,
hajj,the pilgrimage to Mecca,`Arafât and Minâ,
hakîm,sage characterised by an extraordinary sublimation of the mind,
hanîfiyya,monotheism avant la lettre. Before the time that monotheism had become a well-defined doctrine and an established institution,it was the religion in accordance with the natural disposition created in man by God. So it was the faith of people like Abraham,Joseph and the parents of Moses,
haqîqa muhammadiyya, 'the Reality of Mohammed'. In this pre-creation light God deposited all potentialities that will work out till the Day of Resurrection,
hay`a,configuration; habitude,predisposition,
hayûlâ,primary matter. It is the receptacle of form,
hazîra al-quds, 'Holy Enclosure'. A luminous circle formed by the shining figures of the supreme angels and souls of perfect men convened to take decisions in view of devices considered to be beneficial for the inhabitants of the earth. Thus it functions as the will-power of the universe,
hikma,wisdom,prudence. It may consist of practical knowledge or of intuition concerning the divine Essence and Names,
himma,spiritual concentration,inner drive,
hiss mushtarik,the instrument which co-ordinates the percepts of the individual 'external' senses,
 178.

ibdâ`, absolute origination, i.e. the divine Essence's producing effects on *nafs kulliyya* which is free from all impurities,
idâfiyyât, Attributes of correlation which produce effects on the phenomenal world. The items of the empirical world are in essence partial realities and internal productions of the one absolute Reality,
idrâk, logical comprehension,
`iffa, abstinence from trival and exiting pleasures; displaying a proper, i.e. natural sexual behaviour,
ihâla, mutation, transformation,
ihrâm, state of temporary consecration of someone who is performing the *hajj* or the *umra*,
ihsân, sincere worship of God; spiritual perfection, which consists in adoring God 'as if you were seeing Him, for when you do not see Him, He sees you',
îjâd, the giving of existence to creatures by God,
ijâza, licence to transmit the material taught,
ijmâ`, consensus of the Muslim community on a regulation imposed by God,
ijtihad, exerting one's effort in order to derive from indications in the Law an opinion concerning a legal rule; use of independent reasoning; religious strictness,
`illa, most proximate cause; rationale,
`ilm hudûrî, immediate knowledge acquired through mystic experience and not through the canals of ratiocination,
`ilm husûlî, 'acquired', i.e. discursive knowledge,
`ilm ladunî, knowledge imparted directly by God through inner perception,
imâm, head of a city-state, of a school of law; leader of a ritual prayer. In Shî`î faith he is a descendant from `Alî and Mohammed's daughter Fâtima, and functions as a living representation of God. His mere existence is necessary for the subsistence of the world, and it is through him that men are guided and saved,
`inâya, providential ordering,
insân ilâhî, Divine Man, i.e. the prototype of the human species,
insân kâmil, Perfect Man who has realized in himself all possibilities of being,
insilâkh, 'sloughing off' (as the skin of a snake) of possible coverings in order to reveal the true self of man's personality,
irâda mutajaddida, God's creative will that brings about the changes and continuous processes of renovation in the universe,
irtifâqât. *Irtifâq* means literally 'gaining benefit by'. Shâh Walî Allâh coined of its feminine plural a technical term denoting the ways and means people have at their disposal to raise cultural and social standards, and he qualifies the stages reached by their efforts to make a continuous progress simply as the first, second, third and fourth *irtifâq*, i.e. respectively the stages of nomadic life, proper pattern of life, governing of a city-state, and the Caliphate,
ishârât, esoteric allusions,
ishq, ardent love,
 179.
ishrâf, thoughtreading,
ishrâk, attributing associates to God,
`isma, divine protection; purity of character,
istî`dâd, innate receptivity, disposition,
istihsân, advancing an arbitrary personal opinion for reasons of public convenience,
istilâh, metalanguage; inner integration of the angelic and animal potencies,
istikhâra, entrusting God with the choice between two or more possible options,
îtibârât, subtle indications; aspects,

jadhb, attraction by God; trance,
jâhiliyya, 'state of ignorance': the conditions of pagans in the pre-Islamic times,
jâmî`, compendium of all the different classes of traditions: historical, ethical, dogmatic and legal,
jihad, holy war against the infidels; constant struggle against one's basic instincts,
jinn, cosmic spirits, generally believed to be part of the world of the unseen,

kâfir, infidel,
kalâm, speech; speculative theology; apologetics for the sake of banishing doubts of Muslim intellectuals,
kalâm nafsî, internal speech which is an eternal quality, inhering in God's Essence. The revealed Qur'ân is an expression of it,
kâmil, Perfect Man who is superior to other men because of the appearance of the universal soul in his self

making the latter an instrument of its will,
karâmât, charismatic deeds,
kashf, 'unveiling' of the world of mystery; inward revelation,
khafî, 'arcane one'; concealed *latîfa* which is found between the eyebrows,
khalîfa, successor of the prophets in general, and of Mohammed in particular; deputy of a spiritual leader, or a head of an order,
khalq, creating, i.e. having a free disposal over matter so that many forms materialize. It is in fact an inferior activity which is not properly applicable to the divine Essence,
khawâss, exclusive properties; particular aspects,
khayâl, imagination. It is a retentive and totally passive faculty,
khil'â, robe of honour. The bestowal of a garment of honour is a standard mark of investiture,
khirqâ, patched frock, symbol of a novice's vows of obedience. The investiture with it forms part of the introduction into the order,
kufr, unbelief,

latîfa, subtle substance; spiritual centre of a subtle substance,

ma`âd, 'the Return of the souls to the bodies': the Hereafter,
ma`ânî, spiritual entities; concepts, ideas,
 180.

madhhab, school of law; method of traversing the sûfî Path; doctrine, view,
madrasa, college for higher studies,
mâhiyyât, quiddities; realities of the possible phenomena; that what makes phenomena what they are, and not something else,
majâzî, not real: being in existence by way of a trope only; earthy,
majdhûb, the sûfî who is drawn toward the divine presence in state of ecstasy,
majûs, Zoroastrians,
mala a`lâ*, 'Highest Council'. These are supreme angels and the souls of departed prophets and other specifically qualified men. Just as a nervous system regulates the body of a human individual, so the *mala a`lâ regulate the affairs of the human species,
mala sâfil, 'Low Council'. These are auxiliary angels. The sole occupation they are charged with is looking out for what may filter down of orders given by the *mala a`lâ* from above,
maqâm, stage on the sûfî Path; moral habit,
ma`rifa, true knowledge gained by direct experience of enlightenment: gnosis,
maslaha, public interest; consideration of expediency,
mawâlîd, the three (mineral, vegetable and animal) kingdoms of nature,
mawjûd, state of conceptual being based by means of the intellect, i.e. by argumentation and inference,
mazânn, surmised locations,
milla, institutionalized religion; religious community,
mî`râj, Mohammed's midnight journey to the seven heavens in which he reached the immediate presence of God,
mîzân, balance; criterion,
mubashshira, annunciation in a vision of a joyful event,
mufahham, person who is instructed by God and the *mala a`lâ*,
muftî, jurisconsult who gives an authoritative opinion (*fatwâ*). He is not allowed to formulate his response as his personal advice, because the *fatwâ* must have an absolute objective character,
muhaddath, inspired person,
muhkamât, unambiguous verses of the Qur'ân,
mujaddid, renewer who is supposed to appear on the eve of every century,
mujarrad, separate from bodily material: incorporeal,
mu`jiza, evidentiary miracle,
munâfiqûn, 'hypocrites', lukewarm followers,
murâqaba, constant awareness of God; spiritual communion with the divine Attributes,
musannaf, 'arranged'; collection of traditions, organized upon an abstract subdivision in chapters according to their subject-matter,
mushâhada, contemplative witnessing,
musnad, collection of traditions arranged according to the names of the transmitters,

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181.

mutakallimûn, scholars in the field of scholastic theology. They are intent on supplying discursive and reasoned apologia,
mutashâbihât, not clearly intelligible passages in the Qur'ân, treating of the divine Attributes, matters concerning the Hereafter, obscure details in prophetic tales,
mutawâtir, handed down by large-scale dissemination which guarantees the authenticity of a tradition having so many different chains of transmitters that forgery is regarded as inconceivable,

nafas al-rahmân, 'Breath of the Merciful'. As words and letters are united in breathing, so the universe is created by God's exhaling the essences and forms of things. Hence it may also indicate a universe which is not yet given definite form: it is only capable, and being ready to appear in any determined form whatever,
nafs (shahwiyya), the concupiscent soul which has its residence under the umbilicus,
nafs kulliyya, 'Universal Soul'. It is the in-between stage the universe passes through. Necessitated by God, the universe is first at the level of the transcendental determination. Next, it enters the level called *al-nafs al-kulliyya*, i.e. the stage of being that is spreading over the structural forms of the cosmos. Thereafter, the universe descends into the realm of matter (*nâsût*). Besides, it represents the *rûh* (vital principle) of the cosmos. Finally, it is the point of departure and return for all individual human souls,
nafs nâtîqa, reasoning soul. It is the connecting link between the *`ayn thâbita* (transcendental archetype) - which is a purely holy entity - and the *nasama* (lower soul) which belongs to the objects of this tainted world. It represents the kernel of man's personality, orders human lives, and is able to have revelations of angels and visions of the *hazîra al-quds*,
nasama, fine pneuma. It stands for the physiological and psychic dispositions of man and universe, conveying potencies of perception, nourishment and growth,
nash'a, evolutionary stage; level of existence,
nâsikh wa mansûkh, abrogating and abrogated Qur'ânic verses,
naskh, withdrawal; repeal of former heavenly decrees substantiated into a Qur'ânic verse by a newly revealed message,
nâtîq, 'speaking' prophet bringing a revealed message. The first six ones were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed. Each of them was followed by a 'silent' one, who being his *wasî* (legal guardian) was charged with conveying an esoteric interpretation of the message of the previous *nâtîq*,
nisba, a disposition of the reasoning soul which grants likeness to the angels, on account of which information is received from the World of Omnipotence; spiritual atmosphere that presupposes affiliation and connectedness with God or with godly people,
nûr al-quds, 'sacred light': name of a concealed *latîfa* which is able to become acquainted with the disputes of the *mala a`lâ* and 182.
the decisions descending from them,

qabd, 'contraction'. This refers to the feeling of fear and distress to which a mystic is exposed because of the contraction of the heart,
qadâ', divine decree which orders the arrangement of daily occurrences,
qadar, existential determination: applies to individual destiny of God's measurement connected with things at particular moments,
qadîm, uncreated, primeval,
qalb, the heart, i.e. the faculty of inner intuition and seat of religious apprehension,
qasîda, poem with a characteristic tripartite structure,
qibla, the direction to Mecca to which the Muslim turns for his ritual prayer; focus of attention,
qiyâs, analogical reasoning,
qurb al-farâ'id, proximity to God reached by the punctual fulfillment of religious duties,
qurb al-kamâl, proximity to God reached by 'perfection', i.e. acting in accordance with divine wisdom,
qurb al-malakût, proximity to God brought by association with the world of angels,
qurb al-nawâfil, proximity to God reached by supererogative works,
qurb al-wujûd, proximity attained during the overflow of God's pure Being,

rak`a, unit of prostrations, genuflections and prayer formulas in behalf of the *salât*,
râsikhûn fi'l-`ilm, 'persons who are firmly rooted in knowledge'. A distinctive trait of theirs is that their knowledge seems to have descended from God directly into their hearts,

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ra'y, personal opinion,
ra'y kullî, motivation to act for the general weal,
rûh, vital spirit, intermediary between body and soul. It is also a perceptible *latîfa* lying two fingers under the right side of the breast,
al-rûh al-a`zam, supreme spirit,
rukhsa, a relaxation of the strict rule,

sâbiq, outstripper,
sabr, endurance; self-control; voluntary resignation,
sadaqa, charitable donation,
sakîna, a Qur'ânic term apparently a rendering of the Hebrew word *shekina*, the Cloud of Glory, manifesting the presence of the Lord and producing tranquility in the soul; inner peace,
salât, ritual prayer,
salât al-ma`kûs, the *salât* of the 'inverted',
sâlik, strider of the sûfî Path,
samâ`, hearing of spiritual music,
samâhat al-nafs, submission of the soul,
samt sâlih, consistency in conduct,
sha`â'ir, visible symbols serving for the worship of God,
shâhid, 'witness', martyr,
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shajâ`a, valour,
shakhs akbar, 'the Most Large Person', macrocosmos,
sharh al-sadr, expansion of the breast for the favourable acceptance of the truth,
sharî`a*, *shar`, the sacred law of Islam, comprising the totality of Allah's commands that regulate the life of every Muslim in relation to God and his fellow beings,
shawq, yearning,
shirk, idolatry, associating divinity with animate or inanimate objects,
shu'ûn, internal modes of being calling for their externalization. They represent a stage prior to the Names and can be defined as the virtual forms of the Names, or modes of being of the *tajallî*
a`zam,
shu'ûnât, potential Attributes,
siddîq, zealous persevering believer who is 'as kindred to a prophet as sulphur is to fire',
sifât salbiyya, 'privative' Attributes by which God's transcendency is accentuated, as He is denied qualities on account of which result taking a form, occupying a place, need and weakness,
sifât thubûtiyya, 'steady' Attributes. They are the Attributes properly speaking and are from all eternity implied in God's Essence. By the existence of the universe they have become apparent,
sirr, innermost part of the heart which has contact with the *`âlam al-jabarût*. It is also a perceptible *latîfa*, and a sublimed configuration of the *`aql*. Visions are a product specific of it,

subûgh, full expansion. A metaphor either 1) of the cosmogony displaying the result of *subûgh*, a being overfilled with the divine Essence which, like an overflowing fountain, 'vomits' foam, or 2) of a mystic who is sedulous in adopting God's Attributes,
suhba, master-disciple relationship, which guarantees not only a personal control the disciple's progress but also a constant flow of spiritual energy from the master to the novice,
sulûk, progression in the sûfî Path towards the divine Reality,
sunna, 'beaten track': refers to the practices Mohammed endorsed and the precedents he set; God's wont,

tabî`a kulliyya, 'Universal Nature' which as the matrix of the cosmos encompasses all the mouldable materials of the universe,
tadallî, God's coming to the rescue when the universe or mankind have run into trouble. It results in disclosure of knowledge, right guidance consonant with the conditions of that time and perfection of the souls,
tadallî `azîm, logos,
tadbîr, universal planning; divinely provided order of the world for the establishment of good provision,
tafarrus, discerning the intrinsic character of metaphysical truths,

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tafhîm,interior revelation,
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tafsîr,exegesis of the Qur'ân,

tahaqquq,verification of that which is; self-objectification, self-realization,

tahrîf,the falsification of a text in a Holy Scripture,or the garbling of its meaning,

tajâdhub,state of tension,

tajallî a`zam, 'the Most Supreme Theophany': a summary of the realities of the Self-existent,instrumental to reveal the Will of God and to refine the human souls,

tajallî dhâtî,disclosure of the Ultimate Reality,neither in a mirror nor as a phenomenon,but just as It is,

tajalliyyât, 'radiances', i.e. theophanies by which various predicaments of the Ultimate Reality are disclosed to the mystic and he can be coloured by the colour of God,

takammul,inner urge towards self-perfection,

taklîf,individual responsibility,

talfîq,jurisprudential harmonization,

tanazzul,descent; stage of self-unfolding. By the process of it Pure Being,devoid of qualities and relations,gradually becomes verified,

taqarrur,a thing's coming from potentiality to actuality; self-identification,

taqlîd,the unquestioning acceptance of doctrines of the established schools,

tarîqa,religious brotherhood; a sûfî Path to God,

tasarruf,control of a certain aspect of the material world,delegated by God to a *walî* or a mystical leader; spiritual power over one's novice,

tashbîh, 'likening', i.e. the bringing of God into relation with human characteristics; anthropomorphism,

taskhîr,subjugation with a view of turning to profitable account,

atbîq,adaptaion: removing contradictions,integration of the total Muslim structure,

tawajjuh,concentration of the soul on the Ultimate Reality,or on the novice by his spiritual teacher as part of his initiation,

tawakkul,trust in God: which implies not worrying about earning one's livelihood,

tawhîd,affirming of the divine Unity; unification with God and consciousness of one's oneness with God,

tawîl al-ahâdîth,explanation of significative events,

tawjîh,to search out the contextual motive in Qur'ânîc verses,

tayammum,ritual purification by means of sand or dust,

timthâl,exemplary representation; perceptible counterpart (as,for instance,the hand is in respect of man's practical power);

seemly attitude,

`ulamâ',scholar-jurists upon whom the interpretation of the Law rest,

`ulûm,kinds of knowledge forming the basic principles which make possible reflection and inference as well as the execution of the duties God imposes upon mankind,

umma,blessed community,

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ummî,illiterate person whose heart is a tabula rasa,not spoilt by outward intellectual achievement and learning,

`umra,minor pilgrimage to Mecca,

uns,intimacy,

`uqûl,intelligences, i.e. a kind of regulating powers governing the nine spheres around the earth. Each celestial sphere has a separate intelligence of its own,

`urf,common convention. In Muslim legal theory it operates as a principle of subsidiary value,

wahdat al-shuhûd,unity-in-experience implying that the Beloved and lover are joined together but their individuality is preserved,

wahdat al-wujûd,unity of Being based on the premise that 'Everything is He' in stead of 'Everything is from Him'. The things existing are to Being as waves to the sea,

wâhidiyya,unity-in-diversity. It is the stage of the *a`yân thâbita*, i.e. the latent realities of the things contingent,

wahm,fancy; power of abstraction. It is endowed with the faculty to perceive particular ideas in sensible objects,

wahshat,estrangement. A complementary to the experience of *uns*,

wahy,revelatory process,

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wajd, ecstatic experience,
walî, protégé of God; protector,
wasîla, means of access; position of a go-between,
wasiyya, testamentary disposition; directive for a disciple,
wujûd, 'the finding by means of the intellect': existence; being. It can be qualified as *bâtin* (internal) if one
wants to allude to the hidden aspect of being, i.e. the opposite of *wujûd* that has come into phenomenal
reality,
wujûd munbasit, self-unfolding being which follows the stage of being still left in its absolute purity. It
stabilizes the contingent realities,
wujûd zulmânî, man's gloomy existence in the world,

*yâd-dâsh*t, constant concentration on the reality of God which is stripped of sounds, words, ecstatic
emotions, and so on. A rule which a Naqshbandî is required to observe during the *dhikr*- exercises,
Yazdân, Persian name of God,

zakât, obligatory alms. It is handed over to gain purifica-
tion,
zarâfa, sensitivity to art and beauty,
zuhd, renunciation of the world

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Afterword

Because this book is a sort of last testament of my grandfather, I feel it is suitable to share some of his personal and family history with the reader.

My grandfather was born on Juli 18th 1919 in Modjowarno, Java (now Indonesia). He lived there as the eldest son of a protestant minister till he was 13, moving to the Netherlands.

His father and grandfather shared his name: J.M.S. Baljon. Johannes Marinus Simon Baljon. The initials have quite a famous ring in the family. J.M.S the first (1861-1908²¹) was a famous Dutch theologian whose work still show up in Google to this day. J.M.S. the second (1891-1978²²) was a prominent man in the Protestant missionary world in the Netherlands as well as the Dutch Indies. My grandfather had quite a legacy to live up to and he choose to do that by focusing on the religion he had experienced in Indonesia growing up: Islam.

How very much he was his father's son in his own eyes as well as the world's can be seen, I think, from the fact that his earliest articles for the 'Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift' (Dutch Theological Magazine) were signed as J.M.S. Baljon Jr. It wasn't till he had found a job at Groningen University that he changed that to J.M.S. Baljon. Since in the magazine the place of residence of the author was always mentioned as well, losing the Jr. will not have confused the readers.

Perhaps it's suitable that someone who grew up in Indonesia should focus on the mystical side of Islam: Sufism. However, J.M.S. the third didn't study Indonesian Islam, but Sufism in what is now India and Pakistan.

Career ²³

My grandfather studied theology as well as Arabic and Sanscrit at Utrecht University from 1939 till 1946, World War II interfering. He studied Arabic and Sanscrit at the School of Oriental Studies in London from 1946 till 1948, not letting himself be limited by the birth of his first child (a daughter, my mother). He gained a Ph.D. in 1949 on his studies of the work Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan.²⁴ From 1950 to 1957 he was a minister for the protestant church in Blankenham, from 1957 to 1961 in Loppersum. He became UHD at the theological faculty in Groningen in 1961. In 1968 he became lector at the same university for Islam, Indian religions and Urdu. In 1971 he was offered a professorship devoted to Islam at Leiden university where he stayed till he had to retire in 1984.

As a member of the synode of the Dutch Reformed Church (Hervormde Kerk) from 1955 till 1957 he was instrumental in allowing women into the ministry. He and his father had fun stressing that if he, a liberal minister, hadn't represented the otherwise conservative part of the country, women would not be allowed to preach in church. Apparently the matter passed only just.²⁵

He was an advisor to the government (ZWO adviseur) on culture studies (geesteswetenschappen) from 1972 to 1978.

J.M.S. Baljon the 3rd Bibliography

No attempt has been made to trace all my grandfather's articles. The following are all the books he wrote or translated. I have included some of the articles which are still in the family archives, kept by my mother Marijke Baljon (married to Hesselink). This list is in Chronological order of first publication.

English

The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan by J.M.S. Baljon, Jr. D.D. PHD thesis 1949. Several Editions. First Edition Brill 1949, Second revised edition Lahore 1958, reprint Lahore 1964, 1970 (not all reprints with permission).

Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation (1880-1960) by J.M.S. Baljon, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1968

A Mystical Interpretation of Prophetic Tales by an Indian Muslim: Shah Wali Allah's Ta'WIL Al-Ahadith, translated by J.M.S. Baljon in the Religious Texts Translation Series Nisaba, Volume two, E.J. Brill, Leiden 1973

Religion and Thought of Shah Wali Allah Dihlawi 1703-1762 by J.M.S. Baljon, Leiden E.J. Brill, 1968

Muslim Children in Holland, by J.M.S. Baljon, Iqbal Review, October 1981

Full Moon Appearing on the Horizon, by Shah Waliyullah, translated by J.M.S. Baljon, Ashraf, Lahore, 1988²⁶

Indo-Pakistani and Egyptian Muftis on Medical Issues, by J.M.S. Baljon, The Muslim World, Vol. LXXXVI, no. 1, January 1996

Dutch

Stad des Verderfs by Dr. M. Kamel Hussein, translated by Dr. J.M.S. Baljon Jr., K.P. Baljon-van den Ende, De Brug – Djambatan N.V. 1961

Moslimse ambivalentie inzake muziek, openbare les gegeven bij de aanvaarding van het ambt van gewoon lector in de Islam en de Godsdiensten van India aan de Rijksuniversiteit te Groningen op dinsdag 13 februari 1968, door Dr. J.M.S. Baljon, Leiden, E.J. Brill 1968

De motivatie van de moslimse pelgrim, Rede uitgesproken bij het aanvaarden van het ambt van gewoon hoogleraar in de Islamologie aan de Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden op vrijdag 13 oktober 1972 door Dr. J.M.S. Baljon, 1972, University Press Leiden

Notes

¹ Chishtî saint and spiritual successor of the famous Mu`în al-Dîn Hasan (d. 1236), the founding figure of the Chishtî affiliation in India. His tomb is found in Mihrawlî, south of Delhi. He was surnamed Kâkî because during his meditations he fed on small cakes known as kâks.

² Possibly forced by the onslaught of Mongolian hordes (Fazle Mahmud, 'Life of Shah Wali Allah Dehlavi', *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore 1956, vol. XXXIII, 5).

³ A man of tolerant views. In a letter to one of his disciples he makes a plea for paying attention to Hindu religion, stating furthermore that belief in the transmigration of souls need not be qualified as *kufr* (unbelief) ('Ubayd Allah Sindhî, *Il- hâim al-Rahmân*, Azizabad, n.d., II, 29).

⁴ As in former times, it had been the task of his colleague `Abd al-Qâdir al-Jîlânî (d. 1166) to exercise criticism at the court of the caliph (*Taffh*, II, 149 f.).

⁵ Presumably indicating that in the Muslim world production of inspired religious writings had stopped.

⁶ Shâh Walî Allâh seems to assent more to W.M. Watt's view that Mohammed could probably write as much as the average merchant of Mecca (Bell's *Introduction to the Qur'ân*, Edinburgh 1970, 36) than to the traditional Muslim opinion affirming that he was entirely illiterate (*ummî*).

⁷ Though Mohammed had cut off all possibilities of the investiture of a prophet after him, his work was to Shâh Walî Allâh's mind not yet finished. Apparently, by the assumption of a robe, the insigne par excellence of a prophet, the task of participating in the completion of Mohammed's achievements was also appointed to the Delhi divine.

⁸ A Yemeni contemporary of Mohammed who was 'spiritually' initiated by the latter 'from a distance', i.e. without his bodily presence.

⁹ The adaptation of this term for mystical expositions is unmistakably an idea borrowed from al-Ghazâlî who uses the same expression in his esoteric essay *Mishkât al-anwâr*, Cairo ed. 1904, 29. According to the latter, this region is called 'Holy Enclosure' because nothing foreign to it can enter.

¹⁰ The same simile is used to elucidate the theophany Moses was favoured with in the holy valley Tuwan: Hence the elements of air etc. of that place took the form of fire in order to reveal the message of God in the same way as the form reflected in a mirror reveals the one who looks into it (*Lamha* 57).

¹¹ So 'daily occurrences, in substance, come about by the outpouring of actualised temporal Names (*asmâ' hâditha*) from the breasts of the angels nearest to God, who are responsible for the management of creation' (*Khizâna* 2) (note that 'Names' are in fact divine powers scattered all over the universe).

¹² I.e. angels of a high rank are rational beings created from celestial elements, while the element of air is the most striking characteristic of the bodies of angels of a low rank (*Khizâna* 3).

¹³ 'The bearers of the Throne are four angels: one in the shape of a man – and that is the intercessor for men –; another in the shape of a bull – and that is the intercessor for domestic animals –; the third in the shape of a vulture – and that is the intercessor for birds –; and the fourth in the shape of a lion – and that is the intercessor for beasts of prey' (*Sat*, 45).

¹⁴ Their firm consensus is called "strengthening with the Holy Spirit" (See *Qur'ân* V, 113, where this qualification is reserved for Jesus) (*H.B.* I, 16). The Holy Spirit stands for the *tajallî a`zam*, and being strengthened with it implies a participation in the blessings of the *tajallî a`zam* (*Lamha* 58).

¹⁵ They have shapelessness in common with minerals and the possession of a *rûh* with animals.

¹⁶ I.e. 'the Prototype of Mohammed, which is the active Principle in all divine and esoteric knowledge' (A.E. Affifi, *The Mystical Philosophy of Ibnul Arabî*, Lahore n.d., 70).

¹⁷ In chapter 17 of Ibn al-`Arabî's *al-Tadbîrât al-ilâhiyya fî islâh al-mamlaka al-insâniyyailâhiyya*, the *hajar al-baht* (the gem of stupefaction) is elucidated as follows: 'It represents a vital center in the heart of man as a pupil in the eye. As soon as the heart is polished by spiritual exercises, this center becomes visible. Because of the reflection of light waves transmitted by a *tajallî* (divine radiation), light then spreads from this gem and pervades all recesses of the physical body. Because of that, glaring rays of light radiating from this gem 'stupify' and dazzle the mind and other faculties of the mystic.' (see H.S. Nyberg, *Kleinere Schriften des Ibn al-`Arabî*, Leiden 1919, 216 f.).

¹⁸ 'According to the Mu`tazilites the 'attributes may be expressed by adjectives but not by finite verbs [...] for the verb demands an object and suggests something besides God' (A.S. Tritton, *Muslim Theology*, London 1947, 84 f.).

¹⁹ 'The reason why according to Ibn al-`Arabî they are one and the same thing is that all the Divine Names, in so far as they invariably refer to the Absolute, are nothing but the 'object named', i.e. the Essence of the Absolute itself [...] These Names, however, [...] can also be considered by themselves, independent of the Essence to which they refer [...] Considered in this way, each Name has its own reality by which it is distinguished from the rest of the Names. In this respect, a Name is different from the 'object named'. (T. Izutsu, *The Key Philosophical Concepts in Sufism and Taoism*, Tokio 1966, 92 f.)

²⁰ I.e. *kalâm lafzî* (pronounced speech), which is not eternal as is the case with *kalâm nafsî* but created.

²¹ Van 'wolcammer' tot ... Genealogie van de familie Baljon / Baljon p. 20

²² Van 'wolcammer' tot ... Genealogie van de familie Baljon / Baljon p. 20

²³ The source for the dates and most of the details here is a cutting in the family archives without a mention of where it was published. However, since it lacks correcting notes, I take it at face value.

²⁴ It has proved remarkably difficult to find out precisely when my grandfather's PHD thesis was finished and accepted. The family genealogy *Van 'Wolcammer' tot ...* certainly has it all wrong dating it at 1985 (p. 175). A cutting from the

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Dutch national magazine *Vrij Nederland* dated April 16th 1949 sets the record straight: 1949 must be the year. This is confirmed by the obituary his friend Frederik de Jong wrote for *Islamic Studies*, Spring 2001 in which he says: "He was awarded a Ph.D. in Theology from Utrecht in 1949 for a dissertation entitled "The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan which was simultaneously published by E.J. Brill in Leiden."

²⁵ This is as my mother, Marijke Baljon, tells it. She adds that her father and grandfather relished in the thought that she might preach one day. She remembers thinking that she really didn't want to!

²⁶ I have not seen a copy of this work. However, a cutting in my mother's archives confirms the existence of this book, as do online booksellers who list it.